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Local Palestinian Opinon Split On Jordan's Move

The Jordanian government decided September 25 to resume full diplomatic and political relations with Egypt. Sixteen Arab League countries instituted a boycott against Egypt in 1978 after Sadat signed the Camp David accords with Israel. Jordan is the first of the 16 to break the boycott, a decision which has evoked a mixed Arab and Palestinian reaction, outside and in the occupied territories.

The Jordanian foreign ministry made the announcement after endorsement by the cabinet. The official statement declared: "The Jordanian government, which has followed the improvement in the attitude of Arab Egypt under the leadership of Hosni Mubarak in regard to the Arab causes and from its evaluation of the adherence of Arab Egypt, leadership and people to the struggle of the Arab people in the occupied territories, Iraq and Lebanon and to prevent a transformation of the temporary disruption of relations to a permanent one that the enemy would take advantage of, has decided to re-establish diplomatic and political relations with the Arab Egyptian Republic."

The announcement came one day after US President Reagan reaffirmed support for his 1982 peace plan based on Jordanian-Israeli negotiations over the West Bank and Gaza. Israeli major party leaders were split in their most recent reaction to Reagan just as Palestinians in the occupied territories were sharply divided as to the political aims of Jordan's move. In statements to the local press many leaders from the occupied territories gave the decision their support, saying it promotes Arab solidarity and the Palestinian cause. Some said it was a political rapprochement toward US peace initiatives, while others saw it as an attempt by Jordan to speak on behalf of the Palestinian people.

Hilmi Hanoun, the mayor of Tulkarm, supported the resumption of Jordan-Egypt ties, saying: "The resumption of relations is a correct step that should be implemented by other Arab countries as well. The step taken by the Jordanian king is a courageous one. I believe that all Arab countries want to resume political and diplomatic relations with Egypt but, according to the Arab countries' protocols, this step must be unanimous. This is the reason Jordan chose not to submit the proposal for discussion before the Arab League." Hanoun expressed his support of the return of Egypt to the Arab nation. "The Arab world proved its failure after the Baghdad summit to issue any decision in favour of the Palestinian cause. We hope that this decision will be taken by all Arab League members."

The elected mayor of Nablus **Bassam Shaka'a**, who was dismissed by the military authorities in 1982, opposed Jordan's break of the boycott and described it as a unilateral move: "It was unfortunately declared at a time when Egypt is still having connections with the Camp David accords," said Shaka'a, adding that "the move would escalate the contradictions among Arab countries and give the opportunity for the occupation to strike against the national rights of the Palestinian people. We demand that Egypt renounce the Camp David accords and that both Jordan and Egypt declare their rejection of the Reagan initiative and step forward to maintain relations with Syria and Lebanon and to maintain Palestinian national unity. If all these steps are completed the positive signals made by Egypt such as the resumption of the relations between Egypt and the Soviet Union and the return of the Egyptian ambassador to Egypt (from Israel) would be beneficial in serving the basic causes."

Elias Freij, the mayor of Bethlehem called the Jordanian step "an excellent and wise move that will unite the Arabs and Palestinians and will return Egypt to the Arab fold."

Zuhair Rayyes, Gaza lawyer and publisher, said that the Camp David accords do not serve the interests of the Palestinian people. "However, disruption of the relations between Egypt and the Arab world does not serve the interests of the Palestinians." Rayyes considered the Jordanian step a "wise" one. It is an achievement on the road to unifying the Arab attitude and establishing the Arab front.

Mustafa Natshe, the former acting mayor of Hebron, also supported the step saying Hosni Mubarak showed a positive attitude toward Lebanon and the Palestinian people. He called on other countries to imitate Jordan.

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FAMILIES STAGE SUPPORT PROTESTS

Jnaid Prisoners Begin Hunger Strike

Almost 800 Palestinian political prisoners at the two-month-old Jnaid prison in Nablus began an open hunger strike September 23 to protest severe prison conditions. Families of the prisoners waged protests September 24 and 25 in Nablus, Jerusalem and al-Bireh in support of the prisoners' demands. Twenty-five of the striking relatives at the Jerusalem Red Cross stayed there for the night September 25 and declared the next morning an open hunger strike in solidarity with the prisoners.

The hunger strike measure was called for, according to families of the prisoners, after prison authorities refused to listen to the prisoners' demands for bringing conditions in Jnaid up to at least minimum level. One-hundred-and-fifty mothers of prisoners who held a sit-in yigil at the Red Cross offices in East Jerusalem September 25 bitterly complained that their sons were treated like "animals" in Jnaid and were forced to live in "subhuman conditions." One woman protested that her son, Farid Awawdeh, was detained for 18 months without being given medical treatment for an eye condition.

Striking mothers sitting in at Jerusalem's Red Cross offices recalled the Nafha prison hunger strike four years ago in which three Palestinian political prisoners died after jailers attempted to break their strike by force-feeding them. The mothers worried that the Israelis might do the same thing at Jnaid demanded that the Red Cross guarantee that force-feeding not take place at Jnaid and that it provide doctors to check the prisoners' health. Under pressure from the relatives and representatives from the various West Bank women's committees, the Red Cross official agreed to pay Jnaid prisoners daily visits and to make sure that they will not be forced to drink or eat food. The official also agreed to send the demands of the families to the head office in Geneva but declined to do any more, claiming that his organisation cannot get involved in the political situation.

Prisoners at Jnaid put forth their demands in a petition they sent to the Israeli officer in charge of prisons. In that petition the prisoners demanded: proper medical treatment; less crowding in cells and the exercise yard; more light and fresh air into the rooms by opening barricaded windows; radio and television; access to books in the prison library which has not yet been opened; improvement in the quality of food; eating in a dining room rather than in their cells, which have open toilets; and adequate drinking water at all times. The Palestinian prisoners were demanding nothing more than equality in treatment to Jewish prisoners. In contrast, Jewish prisoners who were convicted of terrorist activities against Arabs and are currently serving prison terms at Tel Mond prison near Haifa were reportedly receiving special treatment in their cells described as 'equal to hotel services.'

The Palestinian prisoners at Jnaid and their families also complained that the 16-square-metre cells were large enough for only six people but held 14 prisoners for 22 hours a day. The exercise area is so small that outside activities are virtually impossible, ac[illegible] prisoners' petition. [illegible] the cells were also barricaded by wire and [illegible] preventing entry of fresh air and sunlight.

The prisoners reported that they are receiving no proper medical attention. Sixty-[illegible] of the prisoners were exempted by their colleagues from joining the strike because of their poor health, made worse by the lack of medical treatment. The mother of prisoner Mohammed Shweiki said her son was ill and had not been given medical care. The deteriorating health of prisoners was also blamed on the poor quality of food given to the prisoners and on the fact that they must eat in their cells next to open toilets.

The families also expressed concern at the use of solitary confinement as a means of punishment. Prisoner Mahmoud Khalil Awadallah's family said he has been in solitary confinement for several days and were worried that "this might have [illegible]

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SEA BATTLE NEAR SIDON

3 Commandos Die After Destroying Israeli Gunboat

Palestinian commandos destroyed an Israeli gunboat in a sea battle off the coast of Lebanon September 23. Three commandos were killed and two others wounded and taken prisoner by Israeli troops. Israeli gunboats strafed the coast of Western Beirut in revenge September 24.

The clash occurred on Sunday night off the coast of Sidon near the Awali River mouth. The five-member Palestinian unit came across a number of Israeli gunboats and engaged them in a night-long battle. In a communique issued in Beirut, Fatah claimed responsibility for the attack and said the commandos used rocket launchers to destroy the gunboat.

Israelis reportedly employed helicopters against the commandos, who were finally forced to come ashore near the mouth of the Awali River. Israeli positions on shore opened fire on them, causing the commandos to be surrounded with fire on all sides.

The clash, which ended in the morning, resulted in the death of the three commados, including a French woman named Francoise Kasteman. An Israeli military spokesperson acknowledged the clash had taken place but claimed that only one Israeli soldier was wounded.

The Fatah communique said the commandos set out from Burj al-Barajneh refugee camp in Beirut. It listed the names of the five commandos who took part in the attack. They are: Francoise Kasteman, 34; Fathi Khalil Zaher, 27; Samir Adham al-Basri, 23; Mohammed Zuheir Ghandour, 18; and Tariq Na'im Mustafa, 27.

In the attack aftermath, Israeli military authorities declared a state of emergency in the northern region of Israel. Roads were closed and checkposts set up apparently from fear of commando attacks from the north. Israeli military analysts said that Palestinian commandos are increasingly relying on attacks from the sea against Israeli targets in order to compensate for the strict security measures on land. Israel has repeatedly attacked the Tripoli coast and islands off the Lebanese coast in the past few months, on the pretext that the Palestinian commandos were training for sea attacks in bases in the Tripoli area.

On the night of September 24 unidentified gunboats believed to be Israeli shelled the Beirut coast but no casualties were reported.

Four of the five commandos involved in the operation against Israeli gunboats on September 23, 1984. Three were killed and two others wounded and taken prisoner.

THIS WEEK'S CENSORSHIP

Following is a breakdown for censorship cuts for issue 230, September 28, 1984:

Number of articles submitted to censors	7
Number of articles mutilated beyond use	1
Number of articles partially censored but used	2
Number of articles passed	4

Resistance's Success Spurs Israeli Pullout Plans

Lebanese resistance to Israeli presence in south Lebanon escalated sharply last week as the new Israeli government took political steps towards a partial withdrawal. Doubt was newly raised over the effectiveness and credibility of Israel's military surrogate army in the south, however.

In the aftermath of the South Lebanese Army massacre September 20 in the village of Suhmur in which 13 civilians were killed and 30 injured, resistance fighters ambushed an Israeli military vehicle killing two and injuring another near the village of Mashki in the eastern sector of Lebanon. One of those killed was an intelligence officer, according to the Israeli military spokesperson.

Israeli newspapers quoted new details of the Suhmur massacre. *Al Safir*, a Lebanese daily, said SLA head Antoine Lahad and Israeli army commander (and former West Bank civilian chief) Shlomo Elia were present in the Lebanese village when the massacre took place. *Al Safir* quoted eyewitnesses as saying that the shooting of civilians continued even after direct interference from Lahad.

Israeli newspapers commented that the Suhmur incident proved that the South Lebanese Army was undependable. The Jerusalem Post quoted Israeli commander Elia September 25 as saying that "he received orders not to inform journalists of the massacre." The Israeli army barred foreign journalists from entering south Lebanon. Members of the American CBS network complained to Israeli officials about the army's decision to bar press coverage.

Helicopter Crash

In addition to the two Israeli casualties early in the week, five other Israelis were killed and five more injured, one of them seriously, in a helicopter accident during maneouvres in northern Israel.

The International Committee of the Red Cross in Beirut announced that Israel is holding 866 prisoners at the Ansar detention camp in south Lebanon.

On the political front, the attack on the US Embassy annex in East Beirut which caused 24 deaths and 50 injuries has resulted in an immediate political initiative from the US to Lebanon. The arrival of US Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy to the area brought renewed hopes of a US-prompted Israeli withdrawal. Murphy has held extensive talks with Syrian, Israeli, Lebanese and Jordanian officials.

The change in Israeli attitudes towards withdrawal is seen as a new development brought on by increased resistance attacks. According to press reports, Israel is no longer demanding a simultaneous withdrawal of Syrian and Israeli troops from Lebanon.

Reagan Plan Sparks Controversy in 'Unity' Government

President Reagan announced to the UN General Assembly September 24 that his peace plan revolving around Israeli-Jordanian negotiations was still on the agenda. Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who was in New York for the opening of the General Assembly, responded by stating that the government of Israel had rejected Reagan's proposals in September 1982.

Shamir's statement sparked off a certain amount of consternation among his Labour Party partners in Israel's national unity government. Prime Minister Peres' office immediately issued a statement September 25 to the effect that the foreign minister had been referring to the decisions of another government and that the national unity government had not yet reviewed Reagan's proposals.

In the autumn of 1982, acting then as the foreign minister of the Likud government, Shamir responded to the Reagan plan by rejecting it outright. In contrast to the 'hard line' of the government, the Labour Party responded to the Reagan initiative favourably, seeing it as "the basis for further negotiations."

So far, the policy differences between the two main parties that make up the national unity government — Labour and Likud — have been blurred. Although one of the clauses in their agreement provides for "peace talks with Jordan" there is a great deal of Likud opposition to this idea. Indeed, Shamir seems to have agreed to this clause reluctanty, to the displeasure of other Likud leaders. Israeli foreign policy observers believe that whether or not the split will widen depends on Reagan's next move.

Jnaid

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negative psychological impact on him."

The strike at the Jerusalem Red Cross started early September 25 after families were forcefully returned from a regular visit to Jnaid prison. The families said they were not informed that there was a strike in the prison, which automatically means that the prisoners will refuse family visits. Instead they were told by the Israelis to proceed with the visit which was originally scheduled for September 28 but advanced due to the Jewish new year holiday. When the families reached the prison, they were ordered to return to their homes. When they refused to comply and demanded to be allowed to see their sons in the prison Israeli border guard reinforcements were called and used force against the families to get them to leave. Some mothers said they were "pushed, shoved and cursed" by the soldiers. A 15-year-old girl said she was threatened with physical attack and that the Israelis used "humiliating and insulting terms" against her. The girl was held back by the soldiers and was released after other women intervened on her behalf. The harassment of the families continued at a checkpoint set up outside Ramallah where buses carrying the families were stopped as they were returning to Jerusalem. Men were ordered to step down from the bus and had their identity cards checked. One young man was beaten by the soldiers at the checkpoint, he said, only because he is from Dheisheh camp.

A sit-in strike was also held at the Red Cross office in al-Bireh September 25 and in the Nablus Chamber of Commerce September 24. Al-Bireh strikers demanded that the Red Cross intervene on behalf of their sons and pressure the Israeli military to improve prison conditions. In addition to the sit-in in Nablus, mothers of prisoners marched through the streets accompanied by representatives from various West Bank women's organisations, according to the Arabic *Al Fajr* daily, September 25. The paper reported that the women marched to the Red Cross where they handed the official there a demand to "intervene to save the lives of the striking prisoners." The women then marched to the city Chamber of Commerce where they held their sit-in Nablus shops also shut down for the afternoon in support of the protesters and prisoners.

Women's committees in the West Bank and families of prisoners sent a memorandum to several Arab and foreign officials and to human rights organisations, as well as to Israeli members of parliament, explaining the worsening prison conditions and their serious impact on prisoners. The memorandum urged "the Arab nation, world conscience and defenders of human rights to stand by the occupied Palestinian people in the prisons." It also called for "ending all repressive (Israeli) measures and collective arrests, especially against students, and to stop closing universities." It demanded that an international commission inspect the prisons and that a special local medical committee be allowed to regularly check prisoners' welfare.

Israeli MK Tawfiq Toubi (Democratic Front for Peace and Equality) asked that the issue of the prisoners' strike at Jnaid be put on the agenda of the Israeli parliament. A press conference called for by the League for Civil and Human Rights is scheduled for September 30 in West Jerusalem to discuss the strike at Jnaid.

3 BOMBS IN JERUSALEM

Old City Bomb Injures 4

Onlookers at the site of Bab al-Silsila blast/AO photo.

Four Palestinians were slightly injured when a bomb ripped through the storefronts of six shops in a main street in Jerusalem's Old City September 22. The explosion, which destroyed display windows and some shop furniture, occurred at 3:15 pm. The injured Palestinians were taken from the Hospice Hospital to Hadassah Hospital by Israeli police but no further word on their condition was available.

According to local residents, including the owner of Risheq Cafe in Bab al-Silsila street Harbi Risheq, an unidentified man threw a red sack into the cafe. Isma'il Risheq, a customer in the cafe, thought that the sack contained garbage and threw it into the alleyway in front of the cafe. After a few moments it exploded. Harbi Risheq, in describing the explosion, said: "There was a real panic. All the customers ran or threw themselves on the floor. Passers-by fled and Bab al-Silsila street was deserted." Ghaleb Risheq, who was also in the cafe during the incident, said that when he ran out he noticed one man fleeing towards the Jewish quarter in the Old City. Bab al-Silsila street divides the Jewish quarter from the Muslim quarter and leads to the Wailing Wall.

Israel TV reported September 22 that an unidentified person speaking Hebrew called the Jerusalem police station at Jaffa Gate and claimed responsibility for throwing the bomb. The telephone caller did not reveal the name of any organisation to which he might belong but said, "I threw the bomb and the war has begun against Palestinians."

Another explosive device set to go off on the morning of September 24 was discovered outside the Supersol supermarket in Jerusalem's Ramat Eshkol shopping centre. The small home-made pipe-bomb was found in a carton behind the main door to the supermarket. Police were alerted and sappers successfully neutralised the bomb.

A hand grenade exploded near a house near Mandelbaum Gate September 24 in an area east of Mea Shearim. Israel Radio, which reported no injuries, said the house was known to be a haunt of drug traffickers.

Taibeh Readies for Kahane

Abd al-Latif Habib, head of Taibeh's municipal council, is rallying public opinion and the support of Arab village council heads in the Galilee and Triangle against threats of MK Meir Kahane, head of the extremist Kach movement, to enter Taibeh in the Triangle.

Kahane sent a telegramme to Habib September 26 in which Habib was notified of Kahane's intention to enter Taibeh with his followers.

Kahane wants to persuade Jewish women who married Arabs to return to the Jewish faith. In his telegramme Kahane requested Habib to gather all women in a specific place in Taibeh on October 9 where Kahane says he plans to talk with them alone.

In response to Kahane's telegramme, Habib said: "These degrading attempts would not frighten even a child in Taibeh. On the contrary, this will strengthen our efforts to fight against the Kahane phenomenon." Habib expressed his belief that Kahane and his gang do not work alone and said Kahane is backed by other officials. Habib said that if Kahane attempts to enter Taibeh, all Arab village councils will declare a general strike.

'Clean Clothes' Right Given WB Detainees

The legal advisor to the Israeli occupation authorities, Yitzhak Etzel, announced September 17 that Palestinian prisoners will now be permitted to take along necessary personal articles, such as a change of clothes and essential toiletries, at the time of their arrest. The ruling was made in response to a request by Jerusalem lawyer Lea Tsemel.

Tsemel applied to the military authorities on behalf of a number of her clients who complained that they were not allowed to take essentials such as soap, towels, toothbrush, clean clothes and outerwear from their homes upon arrest. Tsemel told *Al Fajr* that Palestinians who are detained for a period of up to 18 days are allowed no personal effects. West Bank residents do not appear before a judge until the eighteenth day and are unable to wash, shave or change clothes during that time. In the past, personal items have been transferred to detainees through their lawyers and only at the end of the interrogation period, which can last up to 18 days or even longer according to Israeli military law.

Red Cross officials normally transfer a change of clothes and toiletries to prisoners who are awaiting a scheduled trial. After conviction, however, a detainee must be issued such items by prison authorities.

Lea Tsemel told *Al Fajr* that she would like to inform the Palestinian population of this ruling so that they can insist on taking their personal items when soldiers come to make an arrest or to have such articles immediately transferred to them.

Elderly Woman Jailed for Carrying Son's Letter

A 65-year-old woman from Beit Sahour was ordered jailed after being found with a letter from her exiled son. Jamileh Abu Aiteh was sentenced by a Ramallah military court September 20 to a three-month prison term and two years' suspended sentence on charges of bringing the letter via the King Hussein Bridge August 16. She was arrested at the bridge after being found in possession of a letter from her son, Ghattas, who was deported from the West Bank in 1974 for political reasons. All Palestinians are strip-searched at the bridge by Israeli soldiers.

The contents of the letter were not revealed to the court and it is not known to whom it was addressed.

Relatives of Abu Aiteh said the elderly woman is suffering from arthritis and a nervous condition and needs regular medical care. They feared the experience with the military will cause her more physical damage.

Mayor of Beit Sahour Hanna Attrash said his municipality "did all it could to help Abu Aiteh." He said he talked with the Bethlehem military governor and asked him to change the sentence from a prison term to a fine. The military governor claimed he could not help and suggested that the family go to court to change the prison term to a fine. "By the time we get a court hearing," Attrash said, "the term would have been served." He said that the military "should have taken the age of the woman into consideration and should not have punished her in this way, particularly since she is ill."

Relatives of Abu Aiteh said she is serving the prison term, which is retroactive to the day she was arrested, at Moscobiyya detention centre in West Jerusalem; however, Attrash said he is not sure where she is being held now. "I doubt she is at Jerusalem's Moscobiyya," he said. "I believe she has been transferred to Ramle prison." He said he will pay her a visit to check on her condition as soon as he knows where she is.

US Officials Hear WB University Concerns

Representatives of 11 charitable and human rights organisations whose backgrounds are in the field of education, law, refugee relief and governmental affairs, requested and were granted recently two meetings with State Department officials to express their concern over Israeli policy restrictions on West Bank universities.

In the first meeting August 22, kept secret at US government request, the group complained to Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Richard Murphy and to other NEA officials about Israeli harassment of Palestinian universities. In a statement distributed immediately after the second meeting September 12 the group reiterated that the US government has spent more than US$10 million on West Bank universities, which, due to Israeli closures and other such acts, are becoming less able to perform as academic institutions.

Orin Parker, the president of AMIDEAST and a spokesperson of the group, said to the press on September 12 that their first appeal with the State Department concerning the reopening of Najah University by October 1 went unanswered, other than a government release expressing "hope [that] the situation will be resolved... within a reasonable period of time, certainly by the beginning of the new academic year." According to Parker, US hopes seemed to rest on a new Israeli government. In the second meeting September 12 Robert Pelletreau, deputy assistant secretary for NEA, said, "Until a new government is formed [in Israel] we are unable to provide a definite answer."

Hisham Sharabi, professor at Georgetowm University in Washington DC, said he thought State Department officials were "impressed with the seriousness of the delegation," adding, "I don't think they are going to do something out of the way." Speaking of Najah's closure, Sharabi said, "I know what it means to close a university and to deny students the right to education."

The delegation consisted of: Paul Findley, former member of congress from Illinois; Andrew Killgore, retired US ambassador, former US counsul in Jerusalem and a director of the Palestine Human Rights Campaign; John H Davis, former UNRWA commissioner general; Orin Parker, president of AMIDEAST; Hisham Sharabi of Georgetown University, president of the Jerusalem Fund; Richard Curtiss, retired foreign US service officer, executive director of the American Educational Trust; Merle Thorpe, Jr, Washington, DC president of Foundation for Middle East Peace; Peter Gubser, president of American Near East Refugee Aid; John Duke Anthony, president of the National Council on US Arab Relations; Nancy Alexander, legislative secretary of the Friends Committee for National Legislation; and Delton Franz, of the Mennonite Central Committee, US peace section.

Homeowners Win Reprieve on Demolition Order

The Haifa city commissioner was stopped from carrying out an ordered demolition of five Arab-owned homes September 20 by an order *nisi* issued by the city's district court. The five homes in Mu'awiyeh village next to Um al-Fahm were due to be demolished on charges that homeowners had no building license.

According to a report in *Al Ittihad*, the houses were outside village borders when Israeli authorities approved their zoning plan. The village boundaries were fixed very near the homes but did not include them. Landowners outside the village plan are therefore forced to obtain building permits from the Israeli planning commissioner and not the village council. Um al-Fahm town council presented a new plan to the authorities which would include the five homes in their jurisdiction, making them eligible for public services.

The demolition order against the five families prompted wide criticism, especially from the Um al-Fahm town council which said the order was "intended to set a precedent" in the area. Council head Hashem Mahamid told *Al Fajr* that "the government wants to use the order against these homes in order to later apply it against others." The town is worried, according to Mahamid, that many other homes in the area will fall victim to this measure since they have not been given licenses to build.

Protest action by the Um al-Fahm council included meetings with members of the Israeli parliament. Memoranda were sent to Israeli Premier Shimon Peres and other members of the cabinet. MK Tawfiq Toubi, of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, also expressed concern to Peres and other officials over the demolition order by Haifa's commissioner, Moshe Glasner, *Al Ittihad* reported September 21. Mahamid did not expect anything to emerge from his council's letters to Israeli officials because, he said, "they never respond to such protests."

The court injunction temporarily stopping the demolition ordered the interior ministry to explain why it wants these five homes demolished. No time limit was given for the ministry to present its explanation to the court. Mahamid still had hope, however, that popular pressure may work to permanently stop the commissioner's order.

The five homes are owned by Ghazi Mufadi Mahamid, Mohammed Ahmad Mufadi Mahamid, Badi Ahmad Mufadi Mahamid, Nasr Muraweh Mahamid, Mustafa Muraweh Mahamid and Tawfiq Mahmoud Nehaiyeh.

Hebron University Accredited

Hebron University graduates will now begin having their degree certificates approved by Jordan's ministry of education this year after the recent admittance of the school to the Union of Arab Universities. Dr Nabil Ja'abari, director of the university's board of trustees, told *Al Fajr* that "the accreditation from Amman was linked to granting membership status to the university in the union." He said graduates from Hebron University will have a better chance of getting jobs in the Arab world since their certificates are to be approved by Amman.

Hebron University applied two years ago for membership in the union and received approval last April 2 during a meeting of the union in Algiers. It was not, however, until earlier this month that Jordan started approving certificates of the university graduates after the university informed Jordan's ministry of education of its admittance to the union.

The accreditation is conditioned on a tightening of enrollment criteria. One condition for student enrollment is that their grade average on the high school matriculation exams, *tawjihi* in the case of Jordan and the West Bank, must be 60 percent or above. This, according to Hebron University Student Council President Jibrin Bakri, is "bound to hurt some students, especially those who sat for the *tawjihi* while in prison." Bakri said the highest grade among these students is never more than 65 percent due to prison conditions. As a result, many of them will be prevented from joining an accredited university. Bakri said the student council is studying the matter and will soon issue a statement. The council, he said, is pleased that Hebron University is now a member in the union.

In a related story, Jordan sent a memorandum to Hebron University late in July informing the university board that it does not accept three new members of the board of trustees. No reason was given for this measure but it is believed it involves the political views of the three members.

Court Stops Work on Beit Amin Land

The Israeli High Court granted a temporary injunction September 25 on behalf of nine villagers from Beit Amin, near Tulkarm. Villagers are seeking to stop an Israeli from building a villa on their land.

Villagers say the Israeli, Ze'ev Onn, was tricked into paying for the 100-dunum plot by the head of an Israeli development company, Yitzhak Yanai, who claimed to own the land. The villagers say they have documents to prove their ownership and that Yanai had no legal right to sell the land to Onn. Onn's 'purchase' is therefore fraudulent, argue the villagers.

A January 1982 petition to the High Court by several villagers which also requested a halt to work on the land was dismissed. A representative of the Israeli attorney general promised, however, that the military occupation government would remain neutral on the question of the land's ownership.

Since then, according to Felicia Langer, advocate for the villagers, workers on behalf of five Israeli companies and Onn have undertaken to clear and build on the land. On July 31 of this year, residents of the village physically prevented Onn from laying a foundation on the land for a private villa.

The police, according to Langer, have refused to protect her clients' rights by guaranteeing no work is done on the land while the case is in court. She is petitioning for an order *nisi* against the military government and the police demanding they defend her clients' interests and for a permanent injunction on the private settlement work on the land.

The Jerusalem Post reported September 26 that the court ruled the request for an order *nisi* will be heard by a panel of judges at a future date. Justice Shoshana Netanyahu ordered no further work be done on the site until the High Court rules on the matter.

Teachers : To Help Colleagues

The West Bank's General Committee of Government School Teachers made several decisions September 25 to assist teachers who have been fired or issued forced transfers by military authorities. The committee appointed lawyer Mousa Hajir to appeal cases of teachers who were transferred to remote schools or forced into early retirement.

The committee will send a protest letter to the Israeli military officer overseeing education in the West Bank against the transfer of scores of teachers from their home schools to schools in remote areas. The General Committee's statement said that the arbitrary procedures practised against teachers at the beginning of every year seriously harm the educators. The committee warned Israeli authorities that teachers will go to court to protect their interests.

An activity plan for the current year was also made at the regular meeting. It includes a festival on Teachers' Day, December 14, and a poster calendar and magazine in February 1985. It is organising a health insurance plan for teachers and will undertake a comprehensive study on problems relating to their jobs.

A member of the General Committee told *Al Fajr* that approximately 5000 teachers are registered in the committee. Six months ago the teachers' committee applied to form a union but their application has received no response from military authorities. The committee said it would pursue the issue through legal means.

A letter of gratitude will be sent to the Bir Zeit student council which offered scholarships to the children of teachers. Last semester the student council of Najah also offered 25 scholarships to teachers' children.

Arts Festival at Silwan Club

More than 5000 men, women and children from Jerusalem attended a three-day arts festival organised by the Silwan Club September 20—22. The festival, held in Silwan village on the southern slopes of Jerusalem, included folkloric dancing, song and an enactment of a traditional Palestinian wedding. Attendants of the festival contributed JD600 to the Silwan athletic club.

On the first night, after Silwan's scouting group opened the ceremony with a march and performance by their percussion band, the 25-member Ghassan Kanafani *dabkeh* group entertained spectators for two hours with a series of dances.

Well known popular singer Rajeh Salfiti recited new folkloric poems on the second night of the festival attacking Kahane, head of the racist Kach movement, and Israeli fascism, and praised local martyrs. Walid Abd al-Salam sang some Marcel Khalifeh songs.

The Popular Arts Group, which won first prize at last month's Bir Zeit festival, delivered a musical programme entitled "Wadi Tufah" which included popular songs and *dabkeh* dances.

An organiser of the Silwan festival told *Al Fajr* that the festival gave an opportunity to Palestinian artists and popular folkloric groups to perform to a special audience of Silwan village families.

Israeli intelligence officers were present during the festival.

The Dawn
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A Comprehensive Plan Based on 1947 Partition

by Hanna Siniora

The Palestinian people and its leadership at present face one lone goal: the achievement of an independent Palestinian state.

Hence our people and their leadership, and the various factions, should realise the fact that though the interests of the US and USSR clash, their foreign policies nevertheless are built on the basis of Israel as a sovereign state in the Middle East.

The Palestinian leadership should recognise this fact. They should build their strategy on achieving an independent Palestinian state on the basis of accepting the state of Israel next to the Palestinian state which we are all struggling to attain.

In the next Palestine National Council meeting, the PLO will have to emerge with plans which would lead to the immediate freezing of settlements in the 1967 Israeli-occupied Arab territories. It will have to take effective initiatives and release itself from the vicious circle of 'reaction.' Furthermore, the PLO should introduce a comprehensive Palestinian programme which would be acceptable to all forces concerned. This programme should be clear in content and based on previous UN resolutions, particularly the official acceptance of the 1947 UN partition plan. Thus the PLO will be able to rid itself of the recurrent demands of recognising the state of Israel.

Agreement to the '1947 partition' would mean acceptance of the principle of the existence of an Israeli state and a Palestinian state. This way the whole world, particularly Israel and the United States, will have no further excuse to ignore the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the recognition of their sole and legitimate representative, the PLO.

Palestinian factions who democratically oppose such resolutions will then assume the position of a legitimate opposition in the Palestinian home, unlike those elements who do not believe in a democratic dialogue and who therefore should be ignored and fought if they resort to arms.

We must learn from the lessons of the recent past so that we will not be confused and waste a further 20 years of our valiant struggle which resulted in thousands of martyrs under the leadership of the PLO.

All the Arab regimes were responsible for the 1948 catastrophe which befell the Palestinian people, and then the loss of all Palestine, including the eclipse of our struggle by the Arabs' historical leadership, 'The Arab High Council' of Haj Amin Husseini.

We are now facing a similar plot being crystalised by the same Arab regimes. These regimes are seeking the destruction of the symbol of our struggle, the PLO, not to mention organisational differences among Palestinian factions, which are also contributing to the destruction of Palestinian solidarity and the PLO.

Indeed, the coming year will be a decisive one for the Palestinian course. Either we formulate a Palestinian plan and begin preparing for it right now, or Palestinian land will remain under occupation, giving Israel the opportunity to complete its desire to change the demography of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Then it will be too late for regrets.

Struggle Until Victory

Hundreds of Palestinian political prisoners who were transferred over the last two months to the new Jnaid prison in Nablus from other Israeli prisons began an open hunger strike September 23 to protest severe prison conditions ranging from overcrowding to lack of medical treatment to spoiled and inadequate food and no books.

In 17 years of Israeli occupation, thousands of Palestinians have been detained in similar prison conditions, but due to their perserverance and continuous struggle against Israeli brutality and suppression and for prisoners' rights, the Israeli authorities were forced to introduce at least cosmetic improvements. Yet the Israeli authorities attempt to withdraw such improvements in the new prisons they are opening. The Israelis claim that by opening new prisons they solve one major problem faced in the current prisons – that of overcrowding.

The truth is that the Israeli authorities are transferring Palestinian prisoners to more difficult conditions while at the same time changing old prisons into model lockups, as in the case with Tel Mond and Kfar Yona prisons, for Israeli Jewish criminal prisoners only.

Israel is violating international laws on two major aspects regarding prisoners: first by ignoring their status as political prisoners and POW's since they are in prison because of the ongoing war between the Palestinians and Israelis, and second by using the prison as a further battleground for its war against Palestinians in order to break them and dehumanise them. All this violates the Geneva Convention, which should be respected by Israel as a signatory.

However, the experience of Palestinians in general and prisoners in particular proved that Israel, backed by the Western countries and especially the US, scoffs at international law. The only way to face the new era of savagery in this world is by more organisation, more unity and continuation of the struggle until victory.

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A Move Away From Aden Spells Permanent Disunity

by Said al-Ghazali

Algerian President Shathli Ben Jadid appealed last week to the deputy commander of the PLO forces, Khalil Wazir, to postpone the convening of the PNC to give the Democratic Alliance more time for consultations with parties of the National Alliance to reach a national consensus based on the Aden agreement that would guarantee the independence and unity of PLO decisions.

Yasir Arafat and Ahmad Jibril at the 1983 PNC meeting in Algiers: better days.

Perhaps the Democratic Alliance – consisting of the Popular Front for Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), the Palestine Liberation Front (PLF), and the Palestinian Communist Party (PCP) – will ask for even more time, in cooperation with Democratic Yemen and Algeria, for continued dialogue with factions of the National Alliance – the Fatah dissidents, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine–General Command (PFLP-GC), *Sa'iqa* and the Popular Struggle Front (PSF) – to persuade them to attend the PNC on the basis of the Aden agreement.

There is no doubt that the meeting of the PNC on the basis of a national agreement is an urgent necessity for the PLO to draw up a Palestinian strategy showing unity on organisational and political matters and with the approval of all Palestinian factions.

While the Democratic Alliance insists on holding the 17th session of the PNC with the participation of the National Alliance factions, Fatah prefers to convene the conference without

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Background Report

Israel and the Need for Secure Oil Suppliers

by Bishara Bahbah

Despite the current glut on the international oil market, resulting in fierce competition among oil producers and an average US$6 pb reduction in oil prices, only three countries — Mexico, Egypt and Norway — have been willing to publicly sell oil to Israel. In fact, it is estimated that less than ten percent of the international oil market has been open to Israel.

Since 1948, with the exception of a seven-year period between 1967 and 1975, energy-poor Israel has been largely dependent on foreign imports for its oil needs. Paying for the oil has been one problem, but procuring the oil has been a greater struggle. Its wars with its Arab neighbours and the latter's economic and political power have complicated matters for Israel and isolated it in the world.

As far back as the 1950's, two of Israel's major oil suppliers, Venezuela and the Soviet Union, stopped shipping fuel. Venezuela's reasons were unknown but possibily connected with the creation of an oil cartel with the Arab countries as major partners. The situation deteriorated even more in 1957 when the Soviet Union decided, for political reasons, to cancel the contracts that committed it to supply Israel with crude oil. The reason given by the Soviet government was that "...the government of Israel, by its aggression against Egypt, made the implementation of these contracts impossible." It was during this period that Iran took over as Israel's major oil supplier because of its indifference to Arab sensitivities.

The 1967 war brought the oil-rich Sinai under Israel's control and the Israelis wasted little time exploiting those fields. In 1968, oil production from the Sinai met 65 percent of total Israeli oil consumption needs. By 1971 — for the first time in its history — Israel was able to pump more oil than it needed. It, nevertheless, continued to purchase oil from Iran while exporting Sinai oil which was inferior in quality. This fuel bonanza did not last long; Israel was eventually forced to give back the Abu Rudais and Belayim fields, the two major oil fields in Sinai, to Egypt as part of the 1975 Sinai interim agreement forcing Israel, once again, to rely on foreign oil imports. Iran was still willing to meet Israel's future oil needs while the US offered to compensate Israel in cash for the 'lost' oil and provided a five-year guarantee to Israel to sell it oil only if the latter could not find oil on the world market.

Realising the political risks involved in depending primarily on one supplier of crude oil, Israel was determined to diversify its crude oil sources in order to decrease its dependence on Iranian oil. In March 1978, it convinced Mexico to increase its crude oil exports to Israel, which had begun a few years earlier, from 20,000 b/d to 30,000 b/d, the equivalent of roughly one-fifth of Israel's consumption. Furthermore, shortly after returning the Sinai fields to Egypt, Israel concentrated its exploration efforts for petroleum in the Gulf of Suez and on increasing its security reserves with the assistance of the United States.

The eruption of the Iranian revolution posed the most serious challenge to Israel's energy security. As early as January 11, 1979, the Iranian government, which was vehemently anti-Israeli, imposed an oil embargo on exports to Israel, which amounted to 60 percent of the latter's energy needs. To avoid possible deviation of Iranian oil through third parties, Iran required all countries to which it exported oil to pledge not to resell or transfer oil to Israel (or South Africa). The buyers were threatened with losing the 'privilege' of buying any more Iranian oil if they did not comply with the ban on oil sales to Israel.

In the meantime, Mexico emerged as the only country that was willing to sell oil to Israel. However, relief for Israel was not far off. In late 1979, the deal with Mexico to increase oil exports to Israel came through while Egypt agreed, as part of its treaty with Israel, to supply its 'peace partner' with Sinai oil. Still, the combined sales from Egypt and Mexico accounted for only two-thirds of Israel's oil needs. Israel was thus forced to turn to the spot market to fulfill the rest of its oil needs.

Egypt, however, might find itself in similar straits by 1991. Egypt's prime minister recently announced that if domestic Egyptian oil consumption continues at the current 15 percent rate, then Egypt would become a net oil importer by 1991.

On the brighter side for Israel, Norway became over the past year the third country and the first European country to publicly sell oil to Israel. This change in Norwegian policy was primarily attributed to the personal efforts of Norway's minister of energy who, according to Norwegian sources, is considered to be a strong friend of Israel. Nevertheless, the long-term future of that relationship seems uncertain. A scheduled visit to Israel by Norway's minister of energy for May of this year was abruptly cancelled without setting a new date for it. The Israeli Embassy in Oslo publicly expressed regret over the cancellation, particularly since Israel was pinning much hope on that visit which was intended to discuss the issue of continued Norwegian oil sales to Israel.

Israel's prospects of finding other countries willing to publicly sell it oil look dim. Even Britain, known for its close ties to Israel, although cautious about its relationship with the Arab world, has persistently refused to sell North Sea oil to Israel. Since early 1979, the British government has limited its oil sales to EEC countries, members of the International Energy Agency and to other countries with which there is an existing pattern of supply. This latter clause includes Finland but excludes Israel. In October 1983, British policy was restated following a meeting between Israel's former minister of energy, Yitzhak Moda'i, and his British counterpart, Peter Walker. Subsequently, in May 1984, Britain again rejected a request by visiting Israeli President Chaim Herzog to sell oil to Israel. Israel's defiant response was to challenge the policy in the British High Court on the grounds that it infringes on EEC law. Israel also intended to file a complaint with the European Court of Justice.

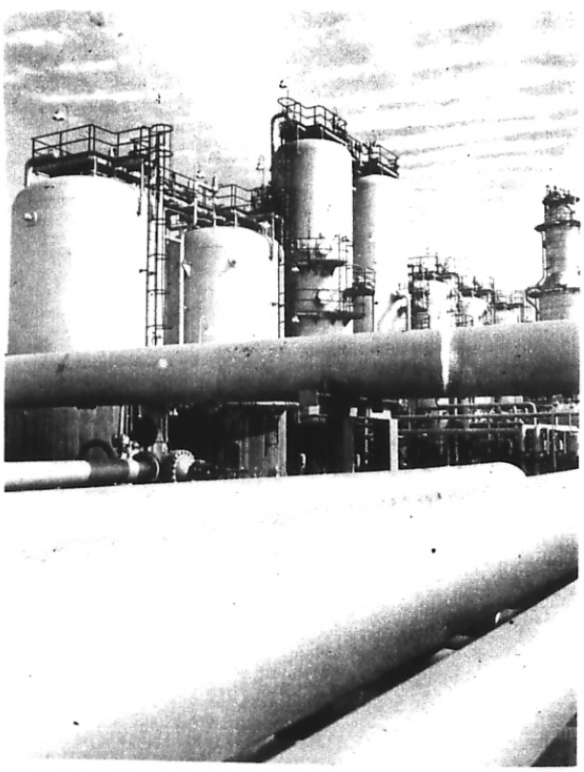
Even paying for available oil has been a considerable burden on Israel's already weak economy. In 1980, the share of Israeli oil purchases from its total imports reached a high of 26.9 percent and in only the first six months of 1984, oil imports constituted 19.8 percent of Israel's total imports (see table).

Despite Israel's search for alternative sources of energy, most of these projects are in their infancy stage and need well over a decade at least to mature. In the meantime, Israel will continue to be heavily dependent on imported oil supplies, particularly since Israel's domestic oil production does not exceed a few hundred barrels per day. Israel will then be vulnerable to the fluctuations of the international oil market and its search for reliable oil suppliers, other than the unstable spot market, will continue to be a central focus of its energy problem.

Percentage of Fuel Imports of Israeli Total Imports
(US million dollars)

Year	Total Imports	Fuel and Lubricants Imports	Percentage
1970	1433.5	69.8	4.83%
1975	4108.7	637.9	15.5%
1976	4076.6	684.8	16.8%
1977	4722.4	737.1	15.6%
1978	5631.0	774.9	13.8%
1979	7396.5	1406.0	19.1%
1980	7878.3	2116.4	26.9%
1981	7847.0	2043.2	26.0%
1982	7960.4	1914.2	24.0%
1983	8370.0	1607.1	19.2%
Jan-June 1984	3988.4	788.7	19.8%

Source: Israel Bureau of Statistics, July 1984



Israel Presses For Free Trade With US Market

Israel has become the most privileged trade partner of the US, ironically on the reputation of its unstable economy. Maher Abukhater looks at the terms of the latest deal to eliminate tariff altogether between the US and Israel.

The proposed free trade zone agreement between the United States and Israel, which would allow zero-tariff on all products exchanged between the two countries, passed the US Senate this week 96–0 and is now scheduled for discussion in the House of Representatives. The trade preference agreement will have nothing of substance for Palestinians in the West Bank, according to Palestinian economist Samir Hazboun, professor of economics at Bir Zeit University. "The free trade area is intended to benefit Israeli-owned production only and to bring in badly needed foreign currency," said Hazboun. Despite forced Palestinian dependence on the Israeli economy, the agreement is designed to benefit Israel over Arab interests, including Palestinian production in the occupied territories.

No Gain for the Palestinians

A primary indication that West Bankers will get nothing out of this proposed economic agreement is the simple fact that Ariel Sharon is currently the minister of trade and industry in the new Israeli cabinet. Sharon, known for his strong anti-Arab sentiments, was an official in the Gaza military government some years ago when he put crippling restrictions on Gaza fishermen where fishing is a major industry. Restrictions included no fishing in the early hours of the morning or late at night when fish are plentiful, decreased area for fishing and newer, stricter requirements for obtaining a license. As Minister of Defence Sharon also masterminded major anti-Palestinian military campaigns, the most notorious of which was the siege of Beirut two years ago. And now as minister of trade and industry the Palestinian population fears he will do all he can to see that the Arab market in the occupied territories, which is heavily dependent on the Israeli economy for raw materials, food and industrial products because of restrictions of the occupation, will not receive any benefit from the trade agreement.

Economically, Israel is in deep trouble. Its trade deficit, the difference between exports and imports, is growing by US$4 billion a year. The inflation rate reached a record 400 percent this year. Foreign currency was depleted drastically in a pre-election Likud bid to make the economy look stable in an attempt to win votes and stay in power. In addition, the cost of living is increasing and so is unemployment. But Israel is anxious to see a trade agreement reached with the US for political reasons as well.

Politically, Israel's policy, especially that directed towards the Palestinian population under its control, is to provide jobs for workers so that they will not direct their attention to political matters. Israeli officials have often stated that by keeping Arabs working they are keeping them from thinking of their political destiny. Therefore, as unemployment among Arab workers rises – it is expected to reach 40 per cent by next year – and as their standard of living decreases, Arab labourers will begin thinking of an alternative to their economic predicament. One solution in the past has been to emigrate but this is becoming more difficult as neighbouring Arab countries are also experiencing economic difficulties and are closing their borders to foreign workers, especially Palestinians. Although Israel would have liked this solution, they fear the other answer, which is for unemployed Arab workers to funnel their energies into the creation of an independent Palestinian state that will look after their interests and provide jobs for them.

Israel feels a free trade agreement will encourage American investment here which means more jobs for Arab workers, as well as Jewish labourers. Arab workers earn less than their Jewish counterparts, making it much easier to further exploit them in the absence of a nationalist trade union to fight for their rights with powers equal to the Israeli labour federation, the *Histadrut*. This cheap labour will be an encouraging sign for foreign investors, particularly multi-national corporations. Despite official Israeli 'concern' for Arab employment, no significant changes will take place in the lives of these Arab labourers, who will remain relegated to the cheap, undesirable jobs that Israeli Jews refuse to take.

Israel cannot allow the West Bank to progress economically other than providing jobs to its workers because this would mean building an economic infrastructure which would lead to a degree of independence in the West Bank. As a result, Israel will not allow Arab producers to benefit from the trade agreement in any way, either by exporting their products or by selling them in the Israeli market. Instead the Israelis will merely produce more, through the labour of these cheaper Arab workers, in order to fill orders overseas and maintain their supply at home. Arab products will not leave the country to supply the new US market, nor will they go inside Israel to meet Israeli consumer needs. Either way, the Israeli occupation has made sure Palestinian producers are stopped from competing in the open market.

Israeli lobbying groups in Washington have been active in favour of quick legislation in the US Congress on this matter despite opposition within the US from producers who fear tax-free Israeli goods will undercut them and from labour unions worried about unemployment.

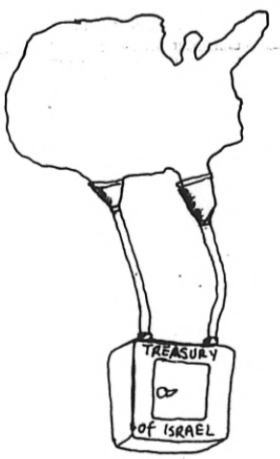
The EEC Agreement

Emanuel Farjoun, an Israeli author of several articles on the Israeli economy, analysed Israeli strategy concerning this free trade agreement in an interview with *Al Fajr*. He said that Israel thinks that because it was able to get benefits out of the European Economic Community without reciprocity, it can now do the same thing with the US. "Israel thinks it can cheat the whole world," says Farjoun.

Farjoun was speaking about a special trade cooperation agreement signed between Israel and the EEC on May 11, 1975. According to the agreement, Israeli industrial exports to the EEC were supposed to reach zero-tariff by July 1, 1977 while tariff on sensitive products like refined petroleum products, textiles and chemicals was to be eliminated by December 31, 1979. As for agricultural products, which constitute about one-third of Israel's export trade, up to 80 percent of the tariff was to be cut from them. Israel, on the other hand, was given until January 1, 1985 to cut tariff on EEC exports.

In addition to these lenient measures, Israel received certain privileges from the EEC. One article of the agreement stated that: "In so far as its industrialisation and development make protective measures necessary, Israel may up to 31 December 1979 introduce, increase, or re-introduce *ad valorem* customs duties not exceeding 20 percent after agreement within the Joint Committee, and up to 31 December 1983 after agreement within the Joint Committee." Israel also had the right to ask for a two-year delay on cutting the tariff on sensitive products when the agreement came up for review January 1, 1979 and again January 1, 1984. Israel took advantage of these provisions.

According to Farjoun, Israel has been asking for delays on reducing the tariff on EEC exports every two years, using the excuse that its economy was suffering and it could not afford to cut tariff any further. Based on this experience with the EEC, Israel is trying the same with the United States. Israeli officials have been pushing since early this year for a free trade zone between



the US and Israel, an agreement that, if passed, would be the first bilateral free trade agreement in US history. The question is – will it benefit the US as much as Israel?

Free Trade Between Israel and the US

Israel already receives significant duty cuts on almost 90 per cent of its exports to the US. This comes under a special trade agreement, referred to as the generalised system of preference (GSP), signed between the US and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1974. The GSP is a special arrangement in which certain products (especially industrial products from US-owned companies) from developing countries are allowed into the US market at low tariff. Israel has been the major beneficiary of this arrangement, followed by Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea. In 1983, US imports from Israel reached US$1.2 billion while US exports to Israel were a comparable US$1.5 billion.

However, the GSP agreement expires at the end of this year and may not be renewed, according to US congressmen. At a press conference in Tel Aviv, August 16, Representative Sam Gibbons (Democrat from Florida) said that the GSP "has not been popular in the US government, particularly in the Congress, and so that bill or that grant of authority for low-duty entry of goods into the US expires the end of this calendar year and the chances of renewing it are very, very slim." He said that even if a GSP bill is passed, countries with higher per capita income will be gradually phased out. Israel is on top of the list of countries to be graduated from the GSP.

As a result, Israel and its American friends in the US Congress have been pushing hard for a new free trade agreement between the two countries in which all exports from both countries will not be subject to tariff when entering either country. Israel's friends in Washington are so eager to guarantee that such an agreement goes into effect that an Israeli lobbying group obtained a classified document on Israeli and US markets before negotiations between the two countries even began. According to a report in the Wall Street Journal, August 31, an FBI team opened investigation into how this document, which was later returned, reached the Israeli lobbying group.

Talks on a free trade zone began in Washington in November 1983 between US President Ronald Reagan and Israel's former Premier Yitzhak Shamir. This is the first time talks have been held regarding a two-way free trade zone in the history of the US. In the past, one-way agreements have been signed, as between the US and Canada for example. Formal negotiations for the US-Israeli agreement opened in January in Washington and so far several rounds of talks have been held. A delegation representing the US House ways and means committee and its trade subcommittee, chaired by Representative Gibbons, arrived in Tel Aviv in a fact-finding mission to study Israel's needs. The delegation left Israel with promises that it would do its best to push for this agreement in Congress, acknowledging, however, that it would be a tough fight.

The delegation's acknowledgment of a 'tough fight' ahead in Congress was not without foundation. Congressional hearings last April on this subject brought out in the open strong opposition from within the US to such an agreement. Contrary to the norm, Israel's labour allies in Washington, who usually back it on every issue, opposed Israel on free trade. The August 31 issue of the *Wall Street Journal* said that the American labour union, AFL–CIO, was among the most outspoken critics of the agreement. The newspaper quoted Murray Seager, spokesperson for the AFL–CIO, as saying that, "If you start bringing down trade barriers with this kind of special exception, we don't know where you will stop." Labour unions and

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Israeli Attack and Cover-Up of USS Liberty

Israeli war planes and torpedo boats bombed a US intelligence ship in international waters during the 1967 war, in an attack called a 'mistake' by both governments. James M Ennes, Jr, author of *Assault on the Liberty*, was the lieutenant-on-watch on the ship's deck. His book, initially well received by the American public, has been the target of an Israeli attempt to discredit it. Whole book orders and taped interviews have simply 'disappeared.' The following article was adapted from an article in *The Link* (May/June 1984).

Seventeen years ago, in one of the worst peacetime naval disasters in American history, Israeli air and naval forces attacked the US navy intelligence ship *Liberty* on the high seas.

Even before the story appeared in the American press, US government public affairs officers went to work promoting a version of the story that was satisfactory to Israel, while representatives of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee descended on the press and Congress to help keep the story under control. Almost immediately, Jacob Javits in the Senate and Roman Pucinski in the House of Representatives took to the floor of Congress to lament the "tragic mistake" that had directed "friendly fire" toward an American ship.

The campaign was so effective that most American newspapers and all the commercial television networks dropped the story almost overnight before most of the facts were known. No American newsman probed for the inside story of the USS *Liberty* affair. No member of Congress called publicly for the facts. No crewmen were interviewed on the evening news. Even today, few people anywhere have ever heard of the USS *Liberty*.

Yet, despite the paucity of news and the fact that the Israeli government promptly apologised and called the attack an accident, insiders knew that 'America's closest ally in the Middle East' had done its best to sink a ship that it knew to be American. One unsatisfied official was Secretary of State Dean Rusk who complained bitterly and officially to the Israeli government. But the complaining voices were never heard by the American public and the official protests were classified top secret to avoid embarrassing the attacking nation. Publicly the Lyndon Johnson administration considered the attack on the USS *Liberty* an understandable error in the heat of war.

As officer-of-the-deck aboard the *Liberty* that day, I had a ringside seat. I personally observed the close range reconnaissance that preceded the attack. I saw the Israeli reconnaissance pilots wave to our crewmen. I talked to my shipmate, chief petty officer Melvin Smith, moments after he intercepted Israeli radio messages in which Israeli pilots informed their headquarters that we were an American ship. I spent a year in military hospitals recovering from injuries received in the attack that followed. And for the next 12 years I probed government files and interviewed everyone who would agree to talk about what happened to our ship and why our government looked the other way.

In 1967, *Liberty* was the newest and most elaborate of nearly a dozen intelligence-collection ships operated by the American navy. Newsmen liked to call them 'spy ships.' Akin to the Soviet intelligence trawlers that haunt the Western world, the American counterparts were fewer, but larger and better-manned. At least six were at sea at any one time, and, whenever tension developed anywhere in the world, the closest ship would be sent to the area.

Thus 13 days before the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli six day war in 1967, middle-of-the-night orders from Washington moved the *Liberty* from her usual patrol area on the west coast of Africa to a new position near the scene of the expected fighting in order to report the war's progress.

Unfortunately the decision-makers in Washington failed to consider that the Israeli government rarely tolerates 'observers,' particularly during wartime. This time, Israeli officials were even more sensitive because, among other things, they planned to capture the Golan Heights from Syria despite heavy White House opposition. If the Golan grab was to succeed, it had to be done quickly and in secret before the Americans could interfere.

When war broke out between Israel and the Arab states on June 5, 1967, General David Elazar assembled his troops near Lake Tiberias in preparation for an assault on the Syrian (Golan) Heights, set to begin at 11:30, June 8.

One obstacle remained. Israeli leaders had learned, probably through observers in Spain, that the USS *Liberty* had stopped overnight at the US naval base in Rota en route to the Gaza Strip. If the ship arrived on schedule, *Liberty* would be within easy radio range of the invasion site hours before the invasion of Syria was to start.

Early in the afternoon of June 7, a Central Intelligence Agency observer in the office of the United States defense attache in the American Embassy at Tel Aviv reported to CIA seniors in McLean, Virginia that Israeli leaders had decided to sink the USS *Liberty* if the ship came near the war zone.

American military leaders took the warning very seriously and immediately issued an order for the *Liberty* to move at least 100 miles from the embattled areas.

The military communications fiasco that followed was described by a House armed services investigating subcommittee as "one of the most incredible failures of communications in the history of the department of defence." As far as the USS *Liberty* was concerned, the entire worldwide military communication system, indeed the entire United

USS *Liberty*, pockmarked with bulletholes from Israeli guns, limps into port in Malta for repairs.

States military command and control apparatus, failed.

Because an American naval vessel was being threatened, officers in the joint chiefs of staff war room at the Pentagon did not rely exclusively upon the then-antiquated military communication system. Too much was at risk.

So, instead of trusting the message system, a Major Breedlove in the Pentagon's joint reconnaissance centre placed a trans-Atlantic telephone call to US navy headquarters in London relaying the order from the joint chiefs of staff to move the USS *Liberty* far away from the Israeli-Egyptian coast.

But because the order came by telephone and because it was not telephoned personally by a senior officer, the London headquarters chose to await a confirming message before taking action. The confirming message, unfortunately, went astray in the communications morass.

As a result, messages which could have saved the ship were delayed, mishandled and not received by the ship.

Careful Examination by Israeli Aircraft

Before midnight on June 7, as *Liberty* passed about 50 miles from Port Said, the first Israeli reconnaissance aircraft began to observe our ship. And from the start they did not act like friendly or even neutral visitors. Instead, they trained their missile guidance radar on our ship as though they were planning to fire deadly guided missiles.

Liberty's trained technicians recognised the radar immediately as Israeli and attempted to report the incident to Washington. Unfortunately, a supervisor insisted that the operators must be mistaken. "Israel would never aim guided missiles at an American ship," the supervisor insisted, and refused to sign the report. He had much to learn.

When daylight came, we saw a procession of Israeli reconnaissance aircraft that flew over us at incredibly low level while our intercept operators eavesdropped on the radio conversation between Israeli pilots and their headquarters. By this time I had relieved the watch on the bridge in order to assume the forenoon watch as officer-of-the deck.

"No sweat, lieutenant," chief petty officer Melvin Smith, our leading enlisted cryptologist, whispered to me. "We can hear the pilots reporting by radio that we are American."

"It's good that they are looking us over so closely," captain McGonagle, the ship's commanding officer, said. "This way there can be no mistakes." (In the Israeli war room, a green peg marked the location of the USS *Liberty*. Alongside the peg were the words, "*Liberty*, an electro-magnetic, audio-surveillance ship of the US navy.")

In eight hours of daylight we were visited eight times by Israeli aircraft that circled our ship thirteen times, sometimes as close as 200 feet directly overhead. Visibility was unlimited. Off-duty officers in swimsuits waved to the pilots and could see the pilots waving back.

My shipmates relaxed. It looked like the war was over.

At 2:00 pm as I was preparing to go below after nearly seven hours on the bridge, radar operators detected three jet aircraft and three motor torpedo boats appoaching from the east. Expecting another reconnaissance flight, I stood stupidly watching the aircraft approach when suddenly a pattern of orange flashes danced the length of our ship accompanied by a deafening roar. Men on the ship's forecastle were thrown high into the air, while men around me fell to the deck. My left leg shattered from the impact of fragments from an Israeli rocket.

We were under intense fire, first by Israeli supersonic Mirage jets that momentarily knocked out our four puny 50-calibre machine guns and disabled all radio antennae, then by slower Israeli Mystere jets that plastered the stacks, gun mounts, open bridge and superstructure with an inferno of napalm. Flames were everywhere.

When *Liberty's* radiomen tried to call for help, they found that all the ship's usual radio frequencies were blocked by a loud buzz saw sound generated by sophisticated jamming equipment, apparently operated from the jets. As they tried to find an unjammed frequency, a napalm bomb exploded outside their compartment, overheating the room and causing paint to smolder within. The space filled with smoke but the ship's safety depended on these men and they would not leave their post. Instead, they lay flat on the deck, below most of the smoke, choking in the foul air, calling into their microphones as they continued to search for an unjammed radio frequency. In less than ten minutes chief radioman Wayne Smith and his men found a clear channel and got a message through to US navy forces operating near Cyprus about 300 miles away.

On the bridge of the sixth fleet carrier *Saratoga*, captain Joseph Tully received *Liberty's* call for help and promptly turned his ship into the wind. A tough, no-nonsense skipper, Tully didn't wait for someone to tell him what to do. He started launching aircraft even as he relayed our message to his seniors. But just before his aircraft were out of sight they were gruffly recalled by orders from Washington.

By this time a radio receiver on the carrier's bridge had been tuned to *Liberty's* distress calls. Even today, *Saratoga's* officers recall their frustration as they heard frantic calls for help from fellow Americans and knew that the aircraft that could have saved them were now flying under order back toward the carriers.

We may never know the reason but we do know that the aircraft which might have arrived in time to save American lives were recalled. A radioman who relayed the order reports that it was given personally by Defence Secretary McNamara. Even a fly-over was forbidden while officials in Washington mulled over the fate of the USS *Liberty*.

Meanwhile, after 25 to 30 minutes of intense air attack by a dozen or more aircraft and unobstructed by sixth fleet air power, three Israeli torpedo boats arrived to finish the job. Our ship was an easy target.

The boats approached at high speed and fired five torpedoes. Luckily, the first shots went wild. One torpedo passed safely astern, where it missed by a bare 25 yards. Another passed so close ahead of the ship that it vanished under the point of the bow, "sounding like a motorboat" to petty officer Rick Aimetti, who stood, astonished, on the forecastle. Two torpedoes passed safely, unseen. And one torpedo made a direct hit on the ship's cryptologic spaces where it killed 25 men and temporarily trapped at least 50 more in the flooded compartment.

When *Liberty* miraculously remained afloat despite severe flooding from a 40-foot torpedo hole, the torpedomen circled the shop at close range, machine-gunning anyone who came on deck. Finally, at 3:15 pm, it appeared that USS *Liberty* was going to sink. Orders came from the bridge to prepare to abandon ship, and *Liberty* crewmen responded by launching three rubber rafts — the only boats not damaged in the attack. Almost immediately the torpedomen machine-gunned the empty rafts, plucked one out of the water and set a course for their base at Ashdod.

Liberty was alone, in flames, dead in the water and sinking. She had no usable lifeboats. Her radios were dead. Thirty-four men were dead or dying and 171 more were wounded from a crew of 294.

Almost two hours after receiving our call for help, US navy commanders were given White House permission to come to the *Liberty's* defence. For a second time that day, rescue aircraft streaked toward the *Liberty*. Immediately, as though aware the game was ending, the Israeli government summoned the US naval attache to report that Israeli forces had "erroneously attacked a maybe US ship" and to offer "abject apologies."

At 4 32 pm, the torpedo boats returned to ask: "Do you need any help?" The reply from the bridge was profane. The attack, after more than two-and-a-half hours, was over.

Inquiry Leads to Inaccurate Report

The cover-up began. *Liberty* sailors were told daily that they could say nothing about the attack to anyone, not even to members of their own families. A court of inquiry was to be held, the men were told, and nothing could be said until the court had completed its work.

But the hearings were limited and some of the most important witnesses were not asked to testify. Lookouts who might have described pre-attack reconnaissance were not questioned by the court. My sworn statement as officer-of-the-deck was read to the court but was not accepted as evidence or entered into the official record. Vital deck logs were rewritten and most references to reconnaissance were deleted. Evidence that failed to support the Israeli version was often changed, lost or ignored by the official body assigned by the navy to "inquire into all aspects" of the attack.

Despite the inadequacy of the court of inquiry, the final report did contain damning testimony and evidence — much of which conflicted directly with the "Findings of Fact" reported by the same court. Unfortunately, the entire 707-page report was classified top secret and only a 28-page watered-down excerpt was released to the public.

Instead of describing repeated reconnaissance flights as low as 200 feet overhead, the US government disregarded the crew's sworn testimony and reported publicly that the attack was an understandable case of mistaken identity which was preceded by only three distant and casual reconnaissance flights. The government ignored the ship's logs and sworn testimony that the American flag stood clearly displayed in a 12-knot wind and reported instead that the flag probably hung limp and indiscernible on a windless day.

Instead of describing a prolonged and carefully coordinated attack in which the ship was under heavy fire for 75 minutes and called desperately for help for another 75 minutes, the US government reported publicly that the air attack lasted only 6 minutes and that all firing ended when the torpedo boats drew close enough to see the American flag. The American government repeated Israel's claim that the ship was mistaken for the Egyptian freighter *Al Quseir*, but failed to note that *Al Quseir*, a rusted-out, 40-year-old horse carrier then awaiting the salvage yard at Alexandria, was a most unlikely candidate for a *Liberty* look-alike.

Meanwhile, the American government complained bitterly but privately to Israel that *Liberty* was indeed identified before the attack. Secretary of State Rusk officially informed the Israeli government that the attack was "quite literally incomprehensible (and) must be condemned as an act of military recklessness reflecting wanton disregard for human life." But such candor was only for diplomatic channels. Publicly, the Johnson administration portrayed the attack as brief, spontaneous, casual and mistaken — a story they knew to be untrue.

American-Israeli Debate Continues

The *Liberty* crew had been told early in the cover-up that they would be free to talk to the press once the court of inquiry report was declassified and released. But this was not to be. When the press blanket was 'lifted,' the men were told that the court of inquiry had reported everything that could be said about the affair. The crew, therefore, could say *only* what had already been reported by the court and only in the same words the court had used.

Omitted from the government's published version of the court of inquiry report were facts that the radios were jammed, that napalm was used and that the life rafts were shot up in the water, that American forces failed to arrive during a two-and-a-half hour ordeal, or anything indicating that the attack was planned and deliberate. No one was allowed to describe the close-range reconnaissance that preceded the attack. Particularly forbidden was any description of the American flag or the steady breeze that displayed the flag clearly for the Israeli pilots to see.

It was clear from the beginning that such a complex, carefully orchestrated, throughly reconnoitered military operation could not have been an accident as Israel claims. The Israeli government, over the past 17 years, has churned out a fascinating series of 'rebuttals' and 'official versions,' each different and each readily disproven.

"I can't tolerate for a minute that this was an accident. I think it was a deliberate attack... It creates a sense of utter frustration when we can't find out what the facts are in this thing."

Meanwhile, several former US government officials and scores of *Liberty* survivors have stepped forward to support the story. And the government files continue to reveal telling evidence that the United States government knows it was deliberate, that the story was covered up and is still being covered up.

The Official Israeli Excuse

The Israeli government has provided at least four 'official versions' of their excuse for the attack on the USS *Liberty*. Various versions conflict with one another as well as with testimony from *Liberty* crewmen and information from the ship's logs. Here are some of the main points of the Israeli excuse, along with the rebuttal arguments that are given by men who were aboard the ship.

Israel: The *Liberty was operating too close to shore in a time of war.*

Survivors: The *Liberty* was in international waters, never less than 13 miles from the nearest land. The US navy court of inquiry that investigated the

US navyman recuperating from the Israeli attack. The US government failed to give rescue orders in time and then propagated the Israeli version of the story in direct contradiction of US servicemen's testimony.

matter pointed out that under international law a neutral nation has a legal right to dispatch a ship into international waters adjacent to an area of hostilities and that each belligerent has a duty to refrain from attacking such a ship.

Israel: The town of Al Arish was shelled from the sea during the morning.

Survivors: The town of Al Arish was not shelled from the sea. That story appears to have been fabricated to explain the presence of torpedo boats in the area.

Israel: The aircraft made a 'run over the ship' and, finding no flag or other identifying marks, commenced the air attack at 2:00 pm. (According to the 1982 version, they made *two* runs over the ship.)

Survivors: No aircraft made a 'run over the ship' in the moments before the attack. Had they done so, they would have seen a distinctly American-looking ship with a freely-flying American flag and American sailors in swim-trunks sunbathing on deck. Other aircraft did circle the ship up to one hour before the attack; however, *Liberty's* radio operators overheard those pilots reporting to Israeli headquarters that the ship *did* fly an American flag.

Israel: When asked to identify herself, *Liberty* refused to do so and opened fire on the boats with a machine gun.

Survivors: The navy court of inquiry investigated the Israeli claim in 1967 and reported officially that the *Liberty* did not refuse to identify herself. To the contrary, the *Liberty* flew an oversized American flag as the boats approached, while a signalman repeatedly flashed "US navy ship" with the ship's 36-inch searchlight.

Israel: Rescue helicopters called by the torpedo squadron commander saw an American flag being raised. This was the first indication that the ship might be American.

Survivors: *Liberty* crewmen recall that the helicopters were fully loaded with armed troops in battle dress. Each helicopter trained a large machine gun on *Liberty* sailors from an open doorway. These were attack helicopters, not rescue helicopters. They did not fire but neither did they offer help. Help was not offered for another 77 minutes (4:32 pm), more than two-and-a-half hours after the first shot was fired.

Israel: Secretary of Defence Robert McNamara told a Congressional committee, "It was the conclusion of the investigatory body... that the attack was not intentional."

Survivors: Robert McNamara's statement in defence of the Israeli attack is misleading and out of context. Israeli apologists ignore the fact that Secretary McNamara was being quizzed by an angry Congressional committee whose members did not believe him at all. The true flavour of the hearing is more accurately reflected in chairman Borke Hickenlooper's protest: "I can't tolerate for a minute that this was an accident. I think it was a deliberate attack... It creates a sense of utter frustration when we can't find out what the facts are in this thing." (Adapted from The Link, May/June 1984).

The world knows only from a distance of the tragedy which occurred in Sabra and Shatila camps in September 1982. Ellen Siegel , ar American nurse, was tending the wounded at a Palestinian hospital while hundreds were murdered in the streets around her.

Gaza Hospital, Sabra Camp, September 1982

The month of September recalls for me Beirut, 1982. I arrived there on September 3 to work as a nurse in a Palestinian Red Crescent hospital located in Sabra camp. I was assigned to a unit which mainly cared for burn victims. Around us refugees in the camp were attempting to rebuild their homes after the bombing and shelling of the summer, striving for some stability in their lives and yearning for security. They were vulnerable. The PLO evacuation had taken away many of their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons.

The dawn of Friday, September 17 brought back the daily heat of the Mediterranean sun beating down on the poor camp dwellings. The sky was blue and clear. The night before I had gone up to the tenth floor of the hospital and watched that sky for an hour, as flares illuminated sections of the camps.

This morning was quieter than the past two: no jets were flying low over the camps. But neither did I hear the early morning sounds of chickens and roosters clucking and squawking from their small cages in the nearby market or the greetings and clatter of vendors getting ready for their daily peddling on the streets below. The distinctive aroma of Arabic coffee being brewed outside the hospital was also missing. When I looked out the window of my ninth floor room, I saw no one in the streets, only scattered puffs of smoke above the camp. BBC's 6:00 am news told me in one sentence that Israel was occupying West Beirut. Nothing more.

I was tired. Yesterday, there had been great activity inside the hospital. Nearly 2000 refugees had come for shelter within its walls. There were about 25 health workers like myself there from other countries helping out the regular staff; apparently the refugees thought they could not be harmed in the midst of Americans and Europeans. Besides this hungry and terrified lot, camp residents brought a steady stream of freshly-injured into the emergency department. None of us at the hospital knew exactly what was going on inside the camps but whatever it was, as trained medical workers we would stay put and do what we could.

Artillery fire was beginning, as it had the past two mornings. It was time to go downstairs. I put on my lab coat and went to have coffee in a room the doctors and nurses had converted into a lounge.

I took a quick tour of the hospital. Neither the elevator nor the plumbing worked any more. The first four floors were tightly packed with the refugees, crouching in groups. They were hungry but little food was available. The emergency room was buzzing; lots of wounded, not enough supplies. I went to my assigned area and tried to do what I did every morning — prepare my dressing cart and begin my rounds.

As always, no water, erratic electricity. No clean gauze or clean instruments; worst of all, no clean sheets. No way to sterilise anything — and at this point, just clean would have been good enough. The discharge from infected wounds and burns, blood, vomit and stool soaked many a patient's linen.

But beyond our usual problems, today's tumult made even our limited efforts impossible. The refugees were saying that Haddad's militiamen, the Phalangists and the Israelis were inside the camps slitting people's throats. They feared that these armed militiamen would come here and kill them. They had heard that hostile forces had entered a hospital just outside of Shatila and killed patients and staff.

Palestinian staff members were beginning to panic. They could hardly function. They went from window to window, looking up. After three months of bombing, they associated disaster with the sky. We decided to dispense only vital medications and care.

Baby Leila was a two-year-old who had been admitted the day before I arrived at the hospital. She was one of several children in a poor Lebanese Muslim family. Leila suffered from burns she received in an accident with a kerosene heater. She was quite ill on admission but by this time she was progressing well. Leila was my 'special' patient. I spent far too much time with her but the satisfaction I felt at her progress and the relationship I had developed with her endearing mother kept me popping in and out of her room. I managed to find a few pieces of clean gauze and ointment and went off to change her dressings.

The sounds of artillery fire were getting much louder and more intense. Smoke was beginning to come in the windows. Leila's mother was getting nervous — she asked me to pack her up some supplies so that she and Leila could leave.

Suad was about ready to leave, too. A Palestinian nursing assistant, she was young and cute and highly excitable even under normal conditions. She spoke some English and somewhere in the United States she had a cousin. She liked the fact that all these people came from around the world to help her people and she enjoyed their company.

This morning Suad was very nervous. Her anxiety level escalated every time another explosion rocked the windows. She asked me for my lab coat; if she had it on, she thought, the soldiers would mistake her for a foreigner and leave her alone. I didn't think it would work but I didn't say so — just happily handed her the coat.

Sometime during the morning, the refugees suddenly disappeared. The administrator of the hospital was telling people that the hospital was "no longer a safe area." The Palestinian and Lebanese staff were also beginning to leave and patients who could walk began departing. Leila's mother by now was following me, tugging at my sleeve, begging for dressing material so she could leave. I managed, on a quick tour of the whole hospital, to pick up a few dressings, a few bottles of needed fluid and some ointment. I hastily instructed her on their use and kissed the two of them goodbye.

Suddenly a healthy-looking young man with a television camera attached to his shoulder asked if I spoke English and then if he could interview me. I said I was busy. He, like the refugees, disappeared.

Around 11:00 am, someone told me that Mohammed, a male nurse from Pakistan, had gone up to the tenth floor with two co-workers to try to see what was happening in the camp. Three shots were fired, one straight through Mohammed's abdomen. He was my friend; I went to check. A trail of blood led from the tenth floor to the first, to the emergency room. Mohammed was there in critical condition, awaiting surgery.

By Friday afternoon, the only people left in the hospital were the international health workers, a few non-foreign staff including Suad, about forty patients who were too sick to move or had no way to leave and injured children who had nowhere to go. It was amazing to watch other patients who for weeks had been on bedrest or who had casts on both legs suddenly lifted up by family and friends and whisked off. These people are survivors.

In the afternoon, we moved the remaining patients down to the second floor. It was no longer possible to stay any higher. Smoke filled the rooms. Sporadic explosions, which had begun far away, were getting so close and so intense that doors were swinging open and shut, equipment was shaking, windows were starting to crack. There was little let-up.

Running on adrenalin, we carried the remaining patients down to the second floor on canvas litters. There was an old man on my unit who was very ill. I don't remember his name or what was wrong with him; I never knew his nationality. He lay quietly in a dirty bed, never cried out, never asked for anything; his eyes always followed you. It was easy to just go past him. I decided he should be one of the first to be taken down. He had lived through more; he deserved to be treated with respect for his age and knowledge. And so he went to what I hoped was safety.

The ordeal of moving the patients took us about an hour-and-a-half. When we were done, I stopped and looked around. This unit meant a lot to me. It was why I had come to Beirut. I had relearned burn care, established special relationships with my patients and fellow staff and witnessed firsthand the horrors of war. Here I had been able to fulfill my desire to help.

Now medicines, equipment, clothing, personal belongings cluttered the floor; bloodstains were everywhere. It seemed very still, empty of people, devoid of noise; a breeze was coming in. The sun was beginning to set, my favourite time of day.

I went to the intensive care unit. There children were crying with fright. Some had seen their families killed and had themselves been injured by militiamen. A woman there had her leg blown off and was suffering from multiple injuries. A newborn was severely dehydrated. Mohammed looked very pale, very ill. There was no blood left for transfusions and every time the electricity went off the respirator stopped.

Suad suddenly appeared and hugged me until it hurt. She knew that she must now prepare herself to leave. At about 4:30 the foreign staff met in the ICU. All of the administrators and Arab staff had left; we were the keepers of the keys.

The explosions were getting louder and nearer; the building shook. We crouched very close to the walls — somehow it seemed safer there. Whatever was happening had to end soon. We selected several representatives to deal with whoever appeared at our hospital door. We agreed to attach to each patient a sheet containing name, date of admission, diagnosis, treatment and medication schedule, all wrapped in plastic. We also decided to negotiate with the soldiers to allow a few staff to remain behind if they wanted us to leave the hospital.

We had much to do. We had to tape up the windows so the glass would not break. We took turns hand-pumping oxygen for those who could not survive without it. I held the infant very close in order to raise her body temperature and tried to get her to suck on a tiny dropper with sugar water. We took special care of Mohammed.

Whenever we had the chance, everyone gathered around my little transistor for the BBC news to find out what was happening outside these hospital walls. All the news was the death of Grace Kelly three days before. It briefly mentioned that Israel had occupied the Soviet Embassy in West Beirut. Not a word about the firing all around us. We felt very alone.

In the late afternoon, people from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) came by and dropped off gauze, oxygen, fresh blood and clean sheets. Best of all, they brought a few doctors and nurses who had been sent to Beirut by the Middle East Council of Churches. In return, they took six of the sickest children to transfer to other hospitals in Beirut. But they didn't tell us what was going on.

Early that evening, some half-dozen well-dressed, Arabic-speaking young men came in. They appeared to be high on drugs, probably hashish, and they were looking for something to eat. They asked how many of the patients were Palestinian. "Is the Kataeb coming at nine o'clock tomorrow morning to slit the throats of the Palestinians?" they asked. It didn't really sound like a question. They left.

Mid-evening: all was quiet outside except for sporadic machinegun fire. Whatever had been going on was almost over; whoever won would come for us in the morning. We transferred the patients crowded in or around the ICU back to the other units. I took the newcomers around, explaining each patient's diagnosis and treatment programme.

We were exhausted and decided to try and make our way up to the eighth floor for a rest. We climbed the stairs very slowly, speaking clearly every few steps so that if anybody was watching or listening, they would know that we were English-speaking foreigners. It was a long and scary ascent.

We all piled into a room. One of the doctors brought out a bottle of liquor and each of us had one drink. We had a few nervous laughs but said little. One by one, we put our heads down on whatever could be made into a pillow and quietly fell asleep, each hoping that the nightmare would be over when we awoke.

Palestine and Culture

Hanan Awwad Opens Field to Study of Feminist Literature

by Said al-Ghazali and Lesley Abukhater

The field of literary criticism in the Arab world, as in the society of which it is a part, has long been dominated by male themes and critics. Recently a Palestinian woman with both journalism and Arab studies to her credit has seen fit to change this male domination and break into the field of literary criticism with her first published work in English on the fiction of Ghadah al-Samman, a feminist author from Syria.

Hanan Awwad, currently head of the culture committee at Abu Dis College of Science and Technology, is breaking new ground in her study of women writers in the Arab world, particularly focussing on their interest in women's concerns as part of the overall Arab struggle for emancipation and self-determination. In addition to her study of al-Samman, completed while at the McGill University Institute of Islamic Studies in Canada, Awwad is currently working on a doctoral dissertation entitled *On the Image of Women in the Palestinian Novel after the Defeat of 1967*. This includes a study of the novels of Ghassan Kanafani, Rashad Abu Shawwar, Emile Habibi, Yehya Yakhluf and Sahar Khalifeh.

Though her work on al-Samman is her first in English, Awwad has an extensive collection of writings in Arabic ranging from poetry to newspaper columns. For the past five years she has been a frequent contributor to Arab newspapers and magazines. Many of her published columns appear in a collection entitled *From My Blood I Am Writing*, published in July 1983. Much of her poetry has appeared in the Jerusalem daily *Al Sha'ab* and she was a correspondent for the Amman daily *Al Akhbar* while in Canada.

Awwad's scholastic concern with Arab women's literature began with her notice of what she feels is a distinct progression in the status of Arab women, particularly in Palestine. "In the past 10 years, we have witnessed a change in the status of women in Palestine and the Arab world," she told *Al Fajr*. "It is surprising to see a peasant woman come to school to study. The Palestinian peasant woman represents the strong will and continuity of the struggle in Palestine."

It is al-Samman's concentration on this status of Arab women in her fiction that interests Awwad. In her book entitled *Arab Causes in the Fiction of Ghadah al-Samman: 1961-1975*, Awwad traces the theme of Arab women's struggle for equality in a traditional society and its development through 15 years of al-Samman's work. The book, published by Naaman Editions in Quebec last year, focuses on al-Samman's fiction first in the period before the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and the Golan Heights and second in the years following the '67 Arab defeat to the Lebanese Civil war in 1975. In his foreword to the book, Professor Issa J Boullata of Mc Gill University's Arabic Literature Department summarises the focus of Awwad's study. "Ghadah al-Samman is shown to be concerned in her earlier period," writes Boullata, "with relations between men and women in Arab society in order to highlight the oppression of women, their inferior social status, the domination of men and the contrast that Western society offers. In the later period, her subject matter broadens in scope, extending to a comprehensive vision of Arab society that sees the broader issues in human relations, including those between the sexes."

Notwithstanding the interest such subject matter has on a reader of Awwad's study, particularly a reader well-versed in Western feminist literature, the very scope of her study has made it difficult not only for her to "cogently analyse" her material, as Boullata indeed praises her for, but has made it difficult for the reader to digest much of Awwad's criticism. Though acknowledging in her preface that "no comprehensive and genuinely critical examination of al-Samman's works has yet been published," a fact she feels enhanced the "originality" of her study, Awwad nevertheless has attempted to be too comprehensive and is thus guilty of not grasping her material firmly enough.

In her nearly 100-page critique, Awwad moves from a statement on the traditional position of women in a predominantly Muslim culture and the obstacles this placed in the way of Arab women writers to a review of al-Samman's life and background to the true centre of her study, namely al-Samman's literary themes in the 15 years under consideration.

It is in the consideration of al-Samman's literary themes that Awwad runs into trouble. Having led the reader to believe her book focuses on the theme of women's relationships with men in Arab society, she nonetheless introduces the reader to all of al-Samman's other themes as well. These additional themes, each of which could provide the topic for a separate essay, are thrown into Awwad's study willy nilly and are not sufficiently related to her original centre on women. Awwad informs the reader in her chapter on the pre-1967 works of al-Samman that "besides illustrating the oppression of Arab women in male-female relationships, al-Samman touches on love, death, cultural alienation, class consciousness, and even explores East-West cultural differences." And Awwad deals with every last one in her critique, leaving a careful reader lost among what she so aptly called al-Samman's "bewildering array of topics."

In trying to trace too many themes in addition to her original study of women's concerns, Awwad has attempted too much for the length of her book. On the one hand she includes a great variety of al-Samman's themes, not delving deeply enough into any one; thus all get short shrift. On the other hand she tends to mention the same themes over and over in the book, dropping one in here and another in there, causing the reader to wish she would deal adequately with one issue and then leave it. In only two pages in chapter three her study jumps from the seething mental state of Arab women to the image of thirst to reckless sexual promiscuity back to the falsehood of men and their cruel indifference, any of which would make an excellent separate chapter. It is this loose organisation and her weak grasp of a coherent outline that is Awwad's basic and only major fault in this book; but it does, however, lead to a superficial treatment of many important themes in al-Samman's work.

Perhaps the strongest point in favour of Awwad's study is found in the interest such a survey of al-Samman and her literary development sparks in the reader. It is truly fascinating to watch the growth of a young artistic mind within the context of her national struggle. By dealing with al-Samman's works in the years before and after '67, Awwad is able to show the reader a woman, and her art, who literally grows up before one's eyes.

In her preface, Awwad explains that the creation of the state of Israel in 1948 and subsequent Arab defeats caused widespread socio-political upheaval in the Arab world. This, she argues, had a great impact on Arab writers, an impact the effects of which al-Samman must have felt as a young writer in the early '60s. During these years she primarily concentrates on the anguish the Arab woman suffers who is locked to a male-dominated course which carries her only backwards, never forwards. Awwad points out al-Samman's concern with the sexual entrapment of the Arab woman and her need for recognition as a human being capable of intense emotion and love. The seeds of an idea which will later grow in her post-'67 period are beginning to form -- the idea that the defeat of Arab armies is a defeat of Arab society in general and that the enslavement of Arab women is in large part responsible for such a defeat.

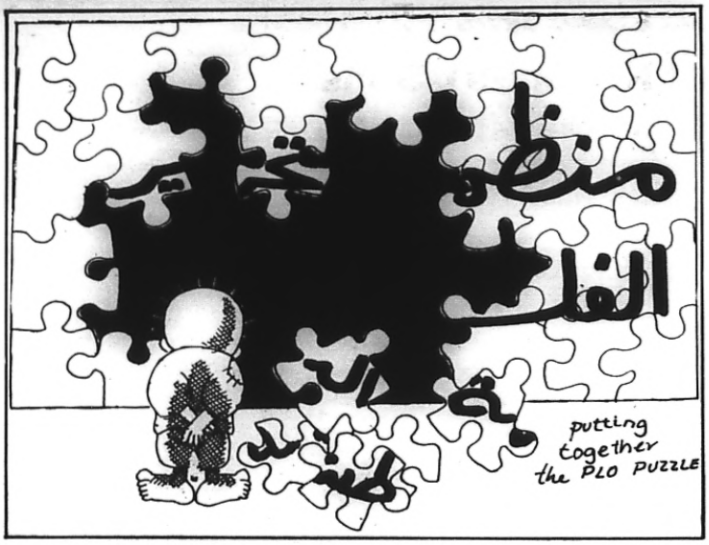
The occupation of further Arab land in 1967 and the forced subjugation of the Palestinian people by Israel produced "an even ruder shock" in Arab intellectuals and artists, including al-Samman. She began to enlarge her focus to include not only the struggle of women but the struggle of Arab masses as well. She, as other Palestinian and Arab feminists, began to see the struggle of women in conjunction with a class struggle. She began to recognise a relationship between the many economic, social and political crises of the Arab world and the concerns of women. Her literary themes then broadened to include a study of Arab society as a whole with its class-ridden hypocrisy and its deceitful leadership, all themes that in some way contribute to the pain of Arab women. This study ends in Lebanon with a civil war caused by these various diseases in Lebanese society. Awwad has intelligently found a stopping place in Beirut where all of al-Samman's themes come together.

The uniqueness of Awwad's study for English readers stems from those readers' general lack of knowledge concerning the literature of Arab women, particularly that of Ghadah al-Samman. Wrapped in a cocoon of Western women's art, few English readers have bothered to notice what was going on in the Near East, particularly because of traditional Western stereotypes that see Arab women as backward, unthinking creatures incapable of producing a George Eliot or working from 'a room of one's own.' It is especially interesting to note then the point Awwad makes of al-Samman's interest in Western feminist literature. Indeed, she incorporates much of Virginia Woolf's technique of stream of consciousness in her work.

The merit of Awwad's text is found in her constant devotion to al-Samman's opinions and emotions, some of which she gleaned from letters and personal interviews. Despite Awwad's correct assertion that "al-Samman's personal feelings and emotions interfere with her intellectual grasp of important Arab issues, thus causing her to propound generalisations of dubious value and create a set of fairly nondescript characters," her revelation of the writer's personality and thought gives a reader not only the sense of knowing al-Samman, the author, but al-Samman, the person. This approach, wrongly criticised in current Western literary study as errant methodology, nevertheless makes al-Samman available as a person, a woman whose thought processes are not unlike our own, rather than a museum piece furnishing students of Arab literature material for dusty dissertations.

Perhaps the most crucial strength of Awwad's book lies not in the subject matter nor in the analysis but in the author herself. As a Palestinian woman, she is most uniquely qualified to understand al-Samman's assertions that the struggle of women goes hand in hand with the struggle of people, of a nation choked by an oppressive system and an oppressive occupier. Al-Samman asserts in her post-'67 work that Arab traditionalism and petty concern with such dubious traditions as a woman's 'honour' and separation of the classes leave the true aggressor, Israel, room to move and destroy. "Arabs are playing into the hands of the Israelis by not repudiating a past that paralyses their w.. to fight," writes Awwad in a paraphrase of al-Samman. And it is Hanan Awwad, the Palestinian with a homeland to struggle for, who can best paraphrase al-Samman, who can best understand what it means to be paralysed and still retain the 'will to fight.'

WINDOW ON THE ARAB PRESS



Palestinian newspapers this week centred on the circumstances surrounding the postponement of the PNC, the US Embassy attack in East Beirut, the massacre at the village of Suhmour in Lebanon and the hunger strike by 800 Palestinian prisoners at Jnaid prison in Nablus.

Local papers carried statements by various PLO leaders concerning the convening of the next PNC session and the pressures against it.

The beginning of the hunger strike and the protest action that followed was widely reported by the Palestinian press. Al Fajr and Al Sha'ab carried front-page photos of the sit-in strike at the Red Cross.

The Crisis

There are several new economic decisions in Israel every day. Rumours talk about severe measures in the context of an economic plan to stop the deterioration.

The inhabitants of the occupied territories will be the first to pay the price of these decisions.

Palestinian workers in Israel will be the first to be let go though they are being exploited and are working under terrible conditions. Many have been laid off already. There will be a sharp crisis in the occupied territories.

The Arab countries and the Arab League are requested to discuss this problem seriously and practically. They must have plans to bolster the steadfastness of the Arab residents through establishing productive projects that can provide jobs for tens of thousands of our people.

AL SHA'AB
September 20

To Protect Last Hopes

Libya signs a unity agreement with Morocco. Egypt declares it may wage war on Libya. Syria talks about a unity that has never been with Iraq which it says was one of the reasons for the Iraq-Iran war, in which Syria sided with Iran and other Arab regimes sided with Iraq.

This is one side of the present Arab reality, the side that affects the Arab-Israeli conflict. Syria is in Lebanon through a Lebanese-Syrian-Israeli equation and is involved in the Gulf war, leaving aside the Palestinian problem except for trying to strike Palestinian legitimacy. As for Libya, it is preoccupied with unity slogans with whomever, even if it be China. Now it is Egypt's turn to wage war on Libya for mining the Red Sea. Egypt holds Libya responsible. Though Libya is not far from such terrible rashness, the present stage does not allow for more bilateral wars among Arab regimes, especially at this time when Egypt stands at the crossroads according to the statement made by its ambassador to Moscow. It may either move away from Camp David or it may be involved in harmful marginal battles.

Qaddafi's regime is well-knowm for its contradictions, mistakes and political and military problems. Since this fact is known to all, then dealing with this regime, especially as far as the Palestinian cause is concerned, should not lead to war with any Arab regime.

We emphasise what is required is a minimum of Arab solidarity.

While we demand an end to the Iran-Iraq war, we also demand the prevention of a new war among Arabs. Further Arab division will destroy any hope that is left to us.

AL FAJR
September 20

Pressure in Lebanon

Terrible facts are emerging about a new massacre in Lebanon. It seems that the perpetrators wanted to 'commemorate' Sabra and Shatila. The new massacre took place in south Lebanon where Israeli forces are in control. It was carried out by the gangs of Lahad which are under the control of the occupying Israeli forces.

On the same day an explosion in the US Embassy in Beirut took place. These events might be 'the first spark' to set afire the internal situation in Lebanon anew.

What does it mean?

Domestic and international pressure is growing on the rulers of Israel to withdraw their forces from Lebanese territory. The Lebanese nationalist forces have managed to overcome many difficulties and obstacles on the way to national reconcilation and unity. The latest agreement between armed factions in Tripoli was a major step in this direction. There is growing confidence among the Lebanese and in the world that as long as the Americans and Israelis are staying 'outside the game,' then Lebanese national reconciliation is something that will be established and guaranteed.

We do not judge a government through a minister's knowledge of what is going on around him. Peres' and his colleagues' acceptance of coalition with the Likud is an indication of submission to the American dictation... including the 'option' of war.

We draw attention to what happened in Lebanon as a possible prelude to igniting the situation anew. At the same time it has become an 'open secret' that what is going on in south Lebanon is a well-calculated attempt to force inhabitants to move from the south. These attempts seem to increase whenever the international pressure increases on Israel's rulers to withdraw its forces from Lebanon.

AL ITTIHAD
September 21

Why?

One may wonder why the Syrian regime persists in its request to dismiss Arafat. Does the problem concern Arafat as a person?

The answer to these Syrian attempts may be summarised by the following reasons: the decline of the role of the Ba'ath Party in the Arab arena and the emergence of the role of the PLO. This decline was due to the ideological structure of the Ba'ath and the changes that destroyed it.

The Palestinian national movement did not dismiss anybody and did not try to monopolise nationalist action. There is room for all. Another reason might be the dreams of Syria's rulers for a greater Syria and their attempt to cloak it with a national covering or it might be the power struggle in Syria... etc, etc.

We conclude that the final outcome does not concern Arafat personally. It concerns Arafat as a symbol of PLO unity. By requiring Arafat's head, Syria is actually requesting the head of the PLO and its independence, unity and existence.

The Syrian regime wants the Palestinian stand removed from the Arab arena of action. It seeks this by weakening and dividing the PLO. Damascus aims at reshaping the Lebanese map and reshaping its international relations in the absence of the Palestinian factor which is always characterised by true, nationalistic revolution that confronts every attempt made against the Arab national rights.

Is it a coincidence that Syria persists in its intransigence towards the PLO at a time when Israel agrees to grant security guarantees in south Lebanon and tries, at the same time, to bolster the Lebanese government dominated by traditional and isolationist forces?

The issue is clear. Syria wants the PLO as 'a 'rubber stamp' in the hands of the Syrian regime.

This Syrian regime will fail as a result of the unity and firmness of our people.

AL SHA'AB
September 22

No to Syria

The Syrian regime is offering new evidence every day of the depth of its conspiracy against the PLO and its intention to deprive Palestinians of the independence of decision making. It continues to put obstacles in the way of convening the PNC.

The dirty Syrian request to dismiss the Palestinian leader 'Abu Ammar' as a price for solving the differences between the PLO and Syria is an insult to the Palestinian people and an aggression on the resolution of the legitimate institutions that elected Abu Ammar as leader.

Arafat, as everyone knows, especially the Syrian regime, was not elected to lead the Palestinian people by Arab decision. So he cannot be dismissed by Arab decision. He did not come to power on the barrel of a gun, as the Syrian president did. So he cannot be removed by the barrel of a gun. Arafat was elected by the Palestinian people who alone have the right to keep or dismiss him. Our people utterly reject the attempt to remove Arafat and we are ready to sacrifice everything to translate this rejection into action.

The Palestinian leadership agreed to give another chance to mediation efforts to improve relations with Syria. But the leadership rejects the attempts by the Syrian regime to exploit this situation and 'veto' the Palestinian independent decision.

The secret behind the feverish attempts by the Syrian regime to abort efforts to convene the PNC is that this regime knows very well that the convening of the PNC at this time means the failure of the conspiracy against the PLO. The convening of the PNC will put an end to attempts to strike the PLO. We are sure the Palestinian leadership is capable of overcoming the present stage.

AL FAJR
September 22

Arab - Jewish Protest of Kahane's US Visit

One hundred and fifty Jews and Arabs from the Washington, DC area protested outside an appearance by racist MK Meir Kahane September 9 at the Silver Springs Jewish Centre in Maryland. Protesters displayed signs in English, Hebrew and Arabic labelling the MK "Ku Klux Kahane" and saying "Kahane — We Are Ashamed You Are A Jew."

The former head of the militant Jewish Defence League in the US was recently elected to the Israeli Knesset as representative of the racist Kach Party.

The protest of Kahane's appearance, which lasted more than two hours with 250 in attendance, was sponsored by the Palestine Aid Society (PAS), the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) and the Washington Area Jews for Israeli-Palestinian Peace (WAJIPP). Protesters called for "a solution (to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict) based on justice and mutual recognition of the rights and dignity of both Jews and Palestinians."

The groups said they were impressed with the cooperation between Jews and Arabs in Um al-Fahm August 29 who banded together to stop Kahane and members of his Kach Party from entering the village to set up an Arab emigration office. Washington area Jews and Arabs decided to set a like example in the States. "Jews and Arabs in the United States," said Jim Leas of WAJIPP, "have made up their minds to follow the Israeli example."

Saba Shami, a Palestinian from Haifa, said he was encouraged by the unexpectedly large number of American Jews willing to publicly condemn Kahane's racism. Shami participated in joint Arab-Jewish demonstrations in Haifa in the mid-'70s to denounce Israel's West Bank settlement policy. "Israeli Jews were quite willing to work together with Arabs," Shami said. "But at least until now, Jews in the US seemed reluctant to do the same, fearing the Jewish establishment would accuse them of being 'self-hating'."

Ironically, it was Meir Kahane who was 'responsible' for the first joint Jewish-Arab demonstration outside the nation's capital. Spokespersons from both WAJIPP and the Palestine Aid Society said they hoped the same type of cooperation would continue long after Kahane was gone.

September 30

West Jerusalem — PRESS CONFERENCE: on conditions at Jnaid prison, Nablus. Beit Agron, 11:00 am. Sponsor: League for Human and Civil Rights.

October 4

East Jerusalem — ART EXHIBIT: works by Majed Nakfouri, at the El-Hakawati Theatre, opening at 5:00 pm.

East Jerusalem — FILM: *Ramparts d'argile*, directed by Jean Louis Bertocelli with Leila Schenna and the people of Tehouda village in Morocco; portrays the rebellion of a young Moroccan girl against the traditions of the village. (French - English subtitles) El-Hakawati Theatre, 8:00 pm.

Jordan's Move

continued from page 1

Rashad Shawwa, the mayor of Gaza, who was appointed and dismissed by the military, said: "We strongly support the resumption of the Jordanian-Egyptian relations. I admit Egypt made a mistake in agreeing to Camp David but this does not mean it should isolate Egypt from the Arab world." Shawwa saluted Jordan for resuming relations with Egypt and called on all Arab countries to imitate Jordan and to unite all Arab countries on the same position. "We need this tactic to unify our position in the international arena," he said.

Ramonda Tawil, co-owner of the *Palestine Press Service*, also described this step as a "positive one towards maintaining Arab solidarity. It is the largest Arab country to recently show a positive stand in supporting the Palestinian cause."

Haidar Abd al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society in Gaza, told *Al Fajr*: "We consider this step a violation of the Baghdad Summit." Abd al-Shafi noted that the move "will not help solve the Palestinian cause. Rather it will delay the achievement of the Palestinian aspirations. The bilateral agreement between Egypt and Israel has only resulted in the continuation of the stubbornness of the Israeli attitude. The Jordanian step is a negative one which will not help attain a just and durable peace in the area."

Lawyer Ibrahim Abu Sitteh, head of the executive committee of the refugee conference in Gaza, also supported the normalisation of the relations between Jordan and Egypt. Abu Sitteh hoped that efforts would be made to maintain relations between Jordan, Egypt and the PLO.

Dr Azmi Shu'abi, member of al-Bireh's dismissed municipality, reiterated the position of Abd al-Shafi, adding that it is an attempt by Jordan to join the PLO in representing the Palestinian people or to circumvent the representation issue entirely. "It seems that the United States gave a sign to the Arab countries to recognise Israel when the American president Ronald Reagan put responsibility on the Arab countries for the current situation in the Middle East," he said.

Yusra Barbari, head of the Palestinian Women's Union in Gaza, told *Al Fajr*: "It is our wish that the resumption of Jordanian and Egyptian relations is based on the declaration of Egypt to renounce the Camp David accords. We are not with the policies of Camp David." Barbari saw connections between Reagan's recent renewal of his September 1982 initiative and the discussion in the new Israeli government of the Reagan plan. Barbari stated: "We are not against a durable peace in the area but we do not see in the Reagan plan the establishment of the independent Palestinian state."

On the wider Arab front, the Algerian foreign minister on September 27 said Jordan's decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt "inevitably raises the question of cooperation among the Arab states and mobilising the masses in support of the Palestinian cause." He reiterated that Algeria's "efforts, as always, have been totally aiming at achieving Arab unity and mobilisation." He continued, "At this critical stage which the Palestinian resistance is passing through, Algeria is called on to forward Arab dialogue." Simultaneously Syria came out vehemently against the Jordanian move and labelled it as falling in the American Zionist embrace and Camp David. Syrian papers said that Jordan will pay highly for their action.

The Democratic Alliance, the National Alliance and the Arab Liberation Front, representing all Palestinian factions other than Fatah, issued separate statements condemning Jordan's action.

Free Trade

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congresspersons are afraid that a free trade area with Israel may take jobs away from Americans and may set a precedence for other countries, like Japan, which already occupies a large share of the American market. Gibbons said, in his press conference in Tel Aviv, that Canada is also "petitioning to enter into a (two-way) free trade arrangement with the US."

The *Journal* quoted Representative Marty Russo, of Illinois, whom it described as an Israel-supporter, as saying that: "In my district, they are worried about jobs. They're (the Israelis) putting some friends in a difficult position which they ought not to be doing at this time." Representative Fortney Stark, of California, was also quoted as writing Representative Dan Rostenkowski (Democrat from Illinois), who is the chairperson of the House Ways and Means Committee which is now discussing the bill, that "every farm group I know of in California is opposing this bill." Farmers are afraid that the agreement, if passed, would bring to the US market cheap Israeli farm products, like tomato produce and citrus exports, which are heavily subsidised by the Israeli government, thus making it difficult for American farmers to compete.

The issues of subsidies and high inflation in Israel have been the centre of controversy so far in the trade negotiations. The American team has been asking Israel to tighten up its economy first and liberalise trade before they can give Israel what it wants. Israel has promised to do so but has asked for permission to do it in stages, since its exports are dependent on subsidies. This is what Emanuel Farjoun said Israel did with the EEC and will probably do with the US as well. American exporters fear that Israel will not effectively deal with its inflation rate and its deteriorating balance of payment, which provides it a good excuse to keep tariff on foreign imports according to the General Agreement for Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which allows countries in a bad economic situation to impose emergency customs on imports.

In addition, because of the high inflation rate and deteriorating economy, Israelis may very likely not be able to buy imported goods, making Israel a bad market for American products although benefitting itself from sales to the American market. The deteriorating value of Israeli currency and the strengthening in value of the American dollar is bound also to hurt Americans selling in Israel while benefitting only Israelis exporting to the US. American exporters will find themselves unwilling to risk selling their products in Israel since it will prove not to be profitable and even a losing deal.

MADE IN ~~DE~~ ISRAEL

For Israel the agreement would mean bringing in more foreign capital by encouraging multinational corporations to invest in Israel in order to take advantage of cheap Arab labour, tax breaks and special privileges not found in developed countries, where the multinationals ordinarily operate. This would mean that Israel will be able to indirectly sell products manufactured by the multinationals to Arab countries under the pretense that they were made in a neutral state. However, these same multinationals will not be allowed to sell their products in Israel, a measure Israel will fight for strongly in order to protect its local production. US producers also fear that Israel will use its land for foreign investment and then sell the products in the US market as Israeli products to take advantage of its duty-free privileges. In return for leasing its land to multinationals, Israel will get foreign investment which means hard currency and jobs and possibly receive a percentage of the foreign company's profits.

It is easy to understand why the Israelis are so anxious to see an agreement reached and willing to sacrifice their friends in the US for it as it will surely benefit them most. It is also easy to understand why many Americans are so strongly opposed to it. Yet, the Trade Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee passed, September 13, a bill recommending the agreement. The bill's passage did not come as a surprise since members of the subcommittee while in Israel in August had promised to push for it regardless of the consequences. Representative Gibbons said in his Tel Aviv press conference August 16, "We've got some tough salesmanship to do in the House of Representatives. We've only got about a month more of working time before the Congress will recess for elections ... We want to get this work completed prior to that election time." Actually the bill flew through the US Senate and is expected to pass handily in the House, despite Israeli claims of a 'struggle' for votes. Israel is hoping that the US Congress will vote on the agreement before it goes into fall recess in October and before the upcoming November elections. It is also hoping that the agreement will become effective January 1, 1985, the date the GSP agreement ends.

This will not be the first time that the US seemingly sacrifices its own interests for the sake of maintaining a strong, strategically important Israel. And it will not be the first time that the Palestinians are not included in a US-Israeli agreement. When it comes to American and Israeli policy, the Palestinians, as usual, are left out in the cold.

WEEKLY REVIEW

Palestinian girl and boy scouts marched down Salah al-Din Street in East Jerusalem September 26 marking the Muslim new year, *(Hijra)* 1405/AO photo

September 19, 1984

1300 DUNUMS CONFISCATED

MAZRA'A AL-QIBLIYEH — Israeli authorities confiscated 1300 dunums of land from the village of Mazra'a al-Qibliyeh in the Ramallah district.

Three Israeli officers from the Ramallah military government and an official from the Custodian of Absentee Property arrived at the village and asked three *mukhtars* to sign the expropriation order.

The three *mukhtars* — Mohammed al-*Haj* Salman, Abd al-Latif *Sheikh* Yousef and al-Abed Samahan — refused to sign the order.

CURFEW LIFTED FROM BALATA

BALATA — Israeli military authorities lifted the curfew imposed on Balata refugee camp near Nablus following a demonstration in the camp to mark the second anniversary of the Sabra and Shatila massacres.

4 CHILDREN WOUNDED IN EXPLOSION

DEIR DIBWAN — Four Palestinian children were wounded when a bomb hidden in a garbage can went off in the village of Deir Dibwan in the Ramallah district.

Villagers said they earlier saw an Israeli plane flying over the scene and throwing out an unidentified object. Israeli sources said the explosion resulted from a fire in the garbage.

SETTLERS ATTACK CHILDREN IN JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM — A group of Jewish settlers accompanied by Israeli security forces stormed the Dar al-Aytam school in Jerusalem and arrested a 15-year-old boy on the pretext of throwing stones.

This is the second case in one week of Jewish settlers arresting Palestinian minors in Jerusalem's Old City.

DHEISHEH CAMP CONDEMNS COHEN'S STATEMENTS

DHEISHEH — The Dheisheh Youth Centre and residents of the camp condemned Tehiya Party MK Geula Cohen's call to remove the Dheisheh camp "because it has become a source of disturbance to security."

They described Cohen's statements as keeping in line with racist Meir Kahane's statements against Um al-Fahm.

UM AL-FAHM YOUTHS ON TRIAL

HADERA — Eight youths from the village of Um al-Fahm accused of disturbing the peace during racist Meir Kahane's attempt to enter the village earlier this month went on trial in the magistrates court in Hadera yesterday.

HARSH SENTENCE FOR POSSESSING SPEECHES

RAMALLAH — Ibrahim Said Zakarneh, a student at Hebron University, was sentenced by the military court in Ramallah to eight months in prison plus two years suspended and a IS80,000 fine on charges of violating a town arrest order imposed on him and possessing a tape cassette containing speeches by PLO Chief Yasir Arafat.

Zakarneh was arrested six months ago.

September 20, 1984

DEMONSTRATION IN SHU'FAT CAMP

SHU'FAT — Palestinians in Shu'fat refugee camp near Jerusalem staged an anti-Israeli demonstration, threw stones at Israeli cars and burned tyres, Israel Radio reported. The radio said Israeli security forces moved reinforcements into the camp and arrested five youths.

SETTLERS REPORTEDLY PREPARING FOR REPRISAL ATTACK

HEBRON — Israeli forces reinforced patrols in Hebron after receiving information about the intention of Jewish settlers to carry out a reprisal attack against Arabs in retaliation for the attack on the Israeli bus near the village of al-Khadr last week, the Israeli daily *HaAretz* reported.

JERUSALEM YOUTH IMPRISONED

LYDDA — Hamzeh Bakr al-Natsheh, from Jerusalem, was sentenced by the Israeli miljtary court in Lydda to one-and-a-half years in prison and another one-and-a-half years suspended on charges of membership in a Palestinian organisation.

STUDENT SENTENCED TO PRISON

HEBRON — Student Awni Badr Abd al-Muhsen Abu Saymeh, of Halhoul, in the Hebron district, was sentenced by the Ramallah military court to eight months in prison on security charges. He was detained in July upon his return from the Soviet Union where he is studying.

WOMAN SENTENCED TO PRISON

RAMALLAH — Ramallah military court sentenced Jamileh Hanna Abu Aiteh, 65, from Beit Sahour, to three months in prison plus 21 months suspended on charges of serving in an 'illegal' union and of bringing a letter with her from Jordan.

NO WATER FOR SCHOOL

BEIT JALA — The Talitha Qumi School administration notified parents of schoolchildren that it must close the school for several days until water is supplied. 1000 students study in the Beit Jala school.

YOUTH TORTURED IN PRISON

Hassan Abu Hussein, 19, a detainee at Fara'a prison in Nablus, was taken to hospital after he was tortured by prison authorities. Hussein is suffering from chest pain. He was detained last week; he is a university student in Syria.

September 21, 1984

TOWN ARREST LIFTED

GAZA — Israeli authorities notified Walid Zakout, a student at Bir Zeit University, that they will lift the town arrest order imposed on him in Gaza six months ago.

Two other BZU students, Ghassan Jarrar and Lawaheth al-Ja'abari, are still under town arrest.

QUMSIEH'S SON RELEASED

Israeli authorities released Samir Qumsieh, head of the Bethlehem Village League and son of the former league head, Bishara Qumsieh, after serving a three-month sentence in prison, Israel Radio reported.

The radio quoted Qumsieh as saying he will meet on Sunday with the Israeli military governor of Bethlehem to discuss his return to league activities.

ACCOUNTANTS' ASSOCIATION BARRED FROM HOLDING CONFERENCE

GAZA — Israeli authorities decided not to permit the Accountants' Association in Gaza to hold its regular conference due to be held on September 28.

September 23, 1984

JORDAN DECIDES TO RELEASE PALESTINIAN PRISONERS

AMMAN — Jordan has decided to release 15 Palestinians held in Jordanian prisons, said informed sources in Amman.

Sources said the decision was taken by the Jordanian Minister of Interior, Suleiman Arrar. Among those released are two members of the Palestine National Council, Ahmad Dahbour and Ahmad Saleh al-Miflih. The rest are members of various Palestinian factions, the sources said.

2000 MARCH TO MARK MASSACRE

TIREH — More than 2000 Arabs and Jews participated in a march in the Arab village of Tireh in the Triangle commemorating the Sabra and Shatila massacres.

HOSPITALS DIRECTOR DIES

Dr Shehadeh Shehadeh, the general director of West Bank hospitals, died yesterday in a French hospital after a long illness. He was 49.

2 YOUTHS IMPRISONED

RAMALLAH — Ramallah military court sentenced Mahmoud Ibrahim al-Na'asan, 21, to 16 months in prison and eight months suspended on charges of attempting to manufacture weapons and paint slogans on walls.

The court also sentenced Imad Said Hussein, 20, to two months' imprisonment and nine-and-a-half months suspended on charges of throwing stones at Israeli military vehicles.

ILLEGAL ADS

JENIN — A charge sheet was submitted to the military court in Jenin against advocate Yousef Zaki Arbadi after authorities found illegal PLO advertisements in his possession last year.

The same advertisements had been found in his brother's possession in the past. The brother, Ahmad, was then given a fine and the advertisements were returned to him.

PETITION AGAINST WORK ON ARAB LAND

BEIT AMIN — Advocate Felicia Langer petitioned the Israeli High Court on behalf of nine residents from the village of Beit Amin in the Tulkarm district requesting the court to issue an order *nisi* preventing settler work on their lands.

September 24, 1984

SONGFUL BROTHERS

DEIR HANNA — Issam Hamid Salem, a youth from the Galilee village of Deir Hanna, was remanded into police custody for 15 days on charges of hoisting a Palestinian flag and singing nationalist songs. His brother, Bassam, was arrested last week on the same charges.

Soldiers set up a checkpoint outside shops on Bab al-Silsila Street in the Old City which were damaged by a bomb thrown by an unknown saboteur. Four people were injured/AO photo

JAILED FOR SETTLEMENT ATTACK

ACRE — The Israeli magistrates court in Acre sentenced seven Arab youths, aged 14-16, from the village of Sawa'ed in the Acre district, to two months in prison and a IS35,000 fine on charges of destroying agricultural products belonging to a neighbouring settlement.

BIR ZEIT UNIVERSITY FESTIVAL FOR NAJAH

BIR ZEIT — The students' movement at Bir Zeit University held a student festival to express solidarity with Najah University. The students called for reopening the university, closed by military authorities for four months.

HOMES DESTROYED

KHARAS — Israeli bulldozers demolished two houses in the village of Kharas in the Hebron district. The houses are owned by residents Abd al-Rahman Mahmoud Abu Arafeh and his brothers, Ribhi and Ali, and Yousef Mustafa al-Huroub.

The authorities threatened to bar any student who does not obtain special permission from continuing his or her studies. All residents over the age of 16 must carry ID s.

2 YEARS FOR LEBANON FIGHTING

NABLUS — Nablus military court sentenced student Omar Mohammed Jamil Jasser to two years' imprisonment plus another two years suspended on charges of taking part in the 1982 Lebanon war and training with weapons.

Omar is a second year medical student in the Soviet Union.

September 25, 1984

MILITARY PERMITS FOR STUDENTS

The Israeli military education officer in the 'civil administration' has notified West Bank education officials that every student bearing an Israeli military ID will have to obtain an annual permission from the education officer to study in school.

Permits must be renewed at the end of each academic year.

KACH USES POLICE ARM

ACRE — Israeli police arrested Nimr Shinawi (Abu Saleh) from the village of al-Maker in the Acre district after a taxi driver who is a member of the racist 'Kach' movement complained to police that Shinawi had attacked him.

The Kach member attacked Shinawi during a quarrel about him washing his car in front of Shinawi's restaurant.

A Move from Aden

continued from page 5

the National Alliance. At the same time the National Alliance refuses the Aden agreement as a national basis for building Palestinian national unity, strengthening the PLO institutions and consequently, protecting the PLO from the danger of division and fragmentation or the political and organisational deterioration that would cause more internal fighting and tension.

Based on the present political differences within the PLO factions, the postponement of the PNC for a short or even prolonged time to persuade the National Alliance factions to accept the Aden agreement is an urgent national need. The Democratic Alliance does not want the PLO institutions to become paralysed; it is attempting to maintain these institutions by comprehensive national consensus.

The fact that the Democratic Alliance aims to convene the PNC after a comprehensive agreement is reached reflects its great concern for achieving national unity and the inevitablity of establishing such unity. Disagreement among PLO factions would threaten the PLO's political future as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

There is no doubt that the Democratic Alliance would harvest positive results during and after the convening of a PNC attended by all the PLO factions. A collective leadership would be created, unity and independence of the Palestinian decision based on Aden would be practically implemented, support of the national movements and the democratic and popular institutions in the world for this new leadership would be escalated and political and organisational effectiveness would reinforce the existence of the PLO in the Palestinian, Arab and international arenas.

No doubt, political and organisational insight has motivated the Democratic Alliance to insist on convening the PNC sessions after national consensus is achieved. Contrary to this attitude, the central committee of Fatah prefers to convene the PNC immediately without the National Alliance, which would guarantee it a majority of supporters within the PNC and therefore the continuance of its political line. The central committee should realise that a PNC without the National Alliance would create a split within the PLO. Therefore an alliance only between Fatah and the factions of the Democratic Alliance would be a crippled one; consequently the Palestinian arena would witness more divisions and more internal clashes among the PLO factions. There would then be no unity for the Palestinian decision nor independence in Palestinian decision-making and the unavoidable result would be a split giving the enemies of the Palestinian people a unique opportunity to discredit the PLO as the sole and legitimate representation of the Palestinian people.

There is no doubt that the central committee of Fatah understands this underlying danger and also understands that the creation of peace in the region on the basis of the Fez resolutions or according to the United Nation's resolutions or the international consensus to convene an international conference attended by all parties to the conflict becomes, under the current political conditions, an unattainable objective without the existence of real political and diplomatic influence that would force the United States and Israel to accept it. Therefore, the central committee of Fatah can find no other way than to maintain Palestinian unity and to endorse the national agreements with all the PLO factions.

Proceeding from this analysis we were not surprised when Abu Jihad agreed to postpone the PNC for two weeks after the appeal by Ben Jadid in the name of Algerian martyrs. Proceeding also from this we expect that Abu Jihad and Yasir Arafat will postpone the PNC meeting yet another time after a possible appeal in the name of Palestinian martyrs or the national unity made by the Democratic Alliance or Algeria and Democratic Yemen.

There is no doubt that the stubbornness of the National Alliance not to attend the PNC sessions on the basis of the Aden agreement, which they feel supports only 'the Palestinian right wing,' will threaten the unity and independence of the Palestinian decision. There will be neither unity nor independence if the factions of the National Alliance insist on imposing their impossible conditions and refuse the Aden agreement.

Thanks to Algeria and Yemen and thanks to international democratic forces who are making great and intensive efforts to guarantee the unity of the PLO factions, there is no other alternative for the Democratic Alliance, there is no alternative for the central committee of Fatah and there is no alternative for the National Alliance except the agreement made in Aden.

With these persistent efforts and courageous mediations it may be difficult to ask the following questions that will be raised if these efforts fail to reach national consensus, under the current call of the central committee to convene the PNC sessions without the National Alliance and the continued refusal of the National Alliance to accept the Aden agreement:

* Does the National Alliance intend to form a second PLO?

* Would Fatah's central committee formally call for convening the PNC without the participation of the Democratic Alliance?

* Would Fatah's central committee call for a 'popular conference' as an alternative to the PNC?

* Would the Democratic Alliance agree to attend the PNC sessions without the presence of the National Alliance?

There are no definite answers to these questions but the current political picture indicates that the choices open to the National Alliance are very limited and fraught with danger. The National Alliance must immediately agree to the Aden agreement.

The Role of the Occupied Territories

At Aden the factions of the Democratic Alliance and Fatah agreed on the necessity of creating a national front in the occupied territories to unite the attitude of the Palestinian masses. However, the idea of the Front remained only ink on paper. The Palestinian in the occupied territories must play an independent and unifying role for the Palestinian masses to rally support for the Aden agreement. The masses in the occupied territories must influence the Palestinians abroad to achieve real national unity. But contrary to this, the Palestinian in the occupied lands currently plays a role of loyal servant to this or that faction and echoes its political tactics, slogans and maneouvres. This kind of practice contravenes the agreement of Aden to form a Palestinian national front.

Fatah and the Democratic Alliance also agreed to maintain national unity and build good relations with Syria. Why then are Syria and the National Alliance factions attacked? And why don't the national forces rally efforts to reach a national agreement among the masses?

The role of the occupied territories is not to reflect the political differences among the PLO factions abroad but to make all needed efforts to unite the PLO and to fight against any attempt that would destroy its political existence.

Bir Zeit University
Arabic for Beginners

A course in written Arabic for beginners will be offered by Bir Zeit University beginning Monday, October 8, 1984. The course lasts for one semester, ending mid-February 1985. Classes meet twice a week, Monday and Thursday, from 4:00—5.15 p.m.

Tuition fees: 30 Jordanian Dinars for the course. Application forms obtained from the Registrar's Office on the New Campus should be returned to the same office by September 27, 1984.

The twice-uprooted Beduin of Laqiya in the Naqab are now fighting to keep their local preparatory school. All schools in the Beduin resettlement camp are on strike, as Awad Abdel Fattah reports, to protest the transfer of 250 students to another desert school.

Laqiya Beduin Strike Against Closure of Local School

Laqiya school: residents see the transfer of its students as the beginning of the end for their village/BA photo

The forced transfer of a preparatory school from the Palestinian Beduin village of Laqiya in the Naqab has aroused residents of this desert village, causing them to protest not only this interruption of their children's education but also Israeli policy with regards to Palestinian Beduin in the south.

In a decision taken last spring by the Israeli ministry of education, the small Beduin school with 250 students was targeted for removal from its village of 8000 to a location 20 kilometres through the desert called Tel Sheva, where it will be combined with a larger school already in existence. Residents of the village fear this is the first step in an Israeli plan to move their entire village.

In the early '60s, the Israeli government began forcing Beduin off their land into concentration villages with at least 20,000 Beduin in each. This action freed Beduin land for Israeli settlement and provided a large cheap labour force for Israeli factories in the Naqab. Without land, the Beduin were forced to work in Israeli industry rather than maintain their traditional vocation as sheep herders and farmers.

In defiance of the school transfer, parents of the students have called a strike involving not only pupils of the village preparatory school but of the elementary schools as well. In all, students from the village are on

The Transfer Plan

Last May, Amram Meletz, the director of education in the Negev, called a meeting of a number of parents in Beer Sheba. Representing the Laqiya parents' committee from the community but not invited by the education ministry attended the meeting. Meletz told them and residents of the

Laqiya students on strike/BA photo

plan to transfer the village's preparatory school to Tel Sheva, one of the Beduin concentration villages. He claimed that the plan came within the framework of the recently-adopted education integration plan whose aim is to integrate students belonging to different origins and cultures. Meletz also claimed the transfer would lower the drop-out rate of the school.

Although the transfer decision met no opposition from a number of the *sheikhs*, whom villagers called "collaborators," the parents' committee dismissed it as unrealistic and detrimental to the future of their sons and daughters. "We made our rejection to the plan very clear to the director and we explained why," said Nabhan al-Saneh, a member of the committee. He discounted Meletz's claim that the transfer is part of the overall integration plan, which, he said, applies only to the Jewish sector. The Israeli plan of integration is intended to combine Jews from Eastern and Western cultures in order to solve Israel's growing problem of hatred between the two groups. "But we, Arab Beduin," said al-Saneh, "belong to one origin and one culture," therefore there is no need to integrate them. Al-Saneh also pointed out that no Jews would be in the new school, making integration a farce. Uri Namir, the head of the Knesset committee on education, said himself last year that the integration plan does not include the Arab sector. There is no wish in the Israeli government to integrate Jews and Arabs.

Parents believe the transfer will be harmful in the long run to their children's education. The distance of 20 kilometres will prevent most of the parents from sending their daughters. Girls in traditional Beduin society do not travel outside the village and are not educated in a school with strangers. Parents said the Israelis offered to supply buses but this does not solve the problem of sending their daughters to a strange town. Even parents of sons object to the plan for fear of sending their children far from the parents' care and out of reach. Parents concerned about their children's whereabouts find a school within their village ideal and do not want to relinquish this advantage. They feel a village numbering 8000 is in need of its own school.

The Strike

Just two days before the start of the current academic year, after parents in Laqiya realised the Israelis were intent on transferring the school, the parents' committee and residents called a strike. On the first day of the school year, the school rooms were vacant. Only the Israeli-appointed teachers refused to strike.

School supplies, which include in most Beduin schools only tables, chairs and movable blackboards, were taken from the village's preparatory school and moved to Tel Sheva by employees of the Jewish regional council for Jewish settlements, which administers Beduin education. When members of the committee and a number of parents tried to prevent them from moving the furniture, they were threatened with calling the police.

Government-appointed teachers have also been uprooted by this new measure. Those who were teaching in the Laqiya preparatory school have been moved to Tel Sheva where they face a much larger student body from various areas and new administration. Even teachers of the elementary school, whose students are striking in solidarity with the preparatory pupils, have not escaped the effects of the move. Three veteran teachers have been notified of their subsequent transfer to remote schools because their sons and daughters are on strike. Moreover, on September 18, in a desperate attempt to break the strike, the education director sent a letter to the elementary school principal threatening to close the primary school on September 23 if parents didn't end the strike and send their sons and daughters to school. But the parents' response was to reject the threat and continue the strike.

In a television interview with Israel TV September 9, Eliezer Shmueli, the director general of education, claimed that only a small part of the village population opposed the transfer. He also claimed that the ministry of education does not want the students to study in unfit rooms, implying that conditions in the Tel Sheva school would be better. However, the Tel Sheva school, a combination of elementary, preparatory and secondary classes, has prepared for the students' arrival by merely adding on rooms, not by significantly altering the educational curriculum. In an interview with *Yediot Aharanot* newspaper, Shmueli said the village indeed opposes the transfer for political reasons, a supposed reference to Beduin opposition of Israeli policy to concentrate them in large villages.

Responding to Shmueli's claims that they didn't want students to study in unfit conditions, one resident asked, "If the Israelis are really interested in improving the conditions of education under which our students study, why don't they improve and develop the school itself instead of transferring it?"

Beduin Education

Over the past 20 years, since the building of the preparatory school of Laqiya, there has been no real change or improvement in the physical situation of the school. It consists of shack-like rooms with no modern equipment, such as a laboratory or air-conditioning and heating systems. Sultan Abu Abayyid, a former teacher, told *Al Fajr* that the school has always been short of rooms and that, as a result, the students have been forced to study in overcrowded conditions, a fact that makes their transfer to an even larger school seem pointless. He added that the chalkboard is the only teaching tool available in the village school.

In addition, there is no secondary school in the village of Laqiya. Some students of secondary school age are forced to travel every day another 20 kilometres to study in one of the three existing secondary schools in the Naqab, a fact that forces young Beduin into the concentration villages. Others prefer to complete their secondary school study in the Triangle and Galilee schools, where they believe opportunities for success are better. Currently about 70 secondary school students from Laqiya study in Tireh and Taibeh villages and in the cities of Haifa and Nazareth. "This costs us very much," said one of the students who studies in Haifa. He explained that the discrimination practised by the Israeli authorities against the Beduin schools in the form of transfers and "deliberate negligence" kills the "opportunities to achieve one's aspirations and goals."

In light of Israel's policy of educational negligence towards the Palestinian Beduin of the Naqab, a sharp drop in the standard of teaching and education has occurred and consequently the rate of failing students and those dropping out has been growing drastically. According to Ahmad Abayyid, who has researched the educational conditions Palestinians of the Naqab, out of 3 students who studied in the Ksai school, 22 kilometres from Laqiya, on nine passed the matriculation exam Among the reasons behind this gloom situation are the appointment of u trained teachers and the unfit conditio in the schools. He explained that t criteria used by the Israelis for choosi teachers is whether the teacher is poli cally silent or not. "They would appoi a teacher who is not qualified and reje a degree-holder if he/she is not political 'desirable'," said Abayyid.

In addition, out of 440 scho rooms available to Beduin schoo children, 144 are unfit for study, figure released by the Israeli ministry c education. The Beduin believe the figu is indeed much higher.

The people of Laqiya have not th slightest doubt that the transfer of thei school is a first step towards the transfe of their village. In addition to neglectin their education, the government ha neglected to provide other services t their village as well. "This is why th Israelis have not yet extended electricity and water to our village," one resident said.

The battle for the village of Laqiya may be just beginning. The government not only intends to deprive it of additional services but is removing the one service it had — the village school. The Naqab Beduin are determined to fight. "We will not move from here," said one resident. "Even if they close the school, we will stick to our lands and our homes."